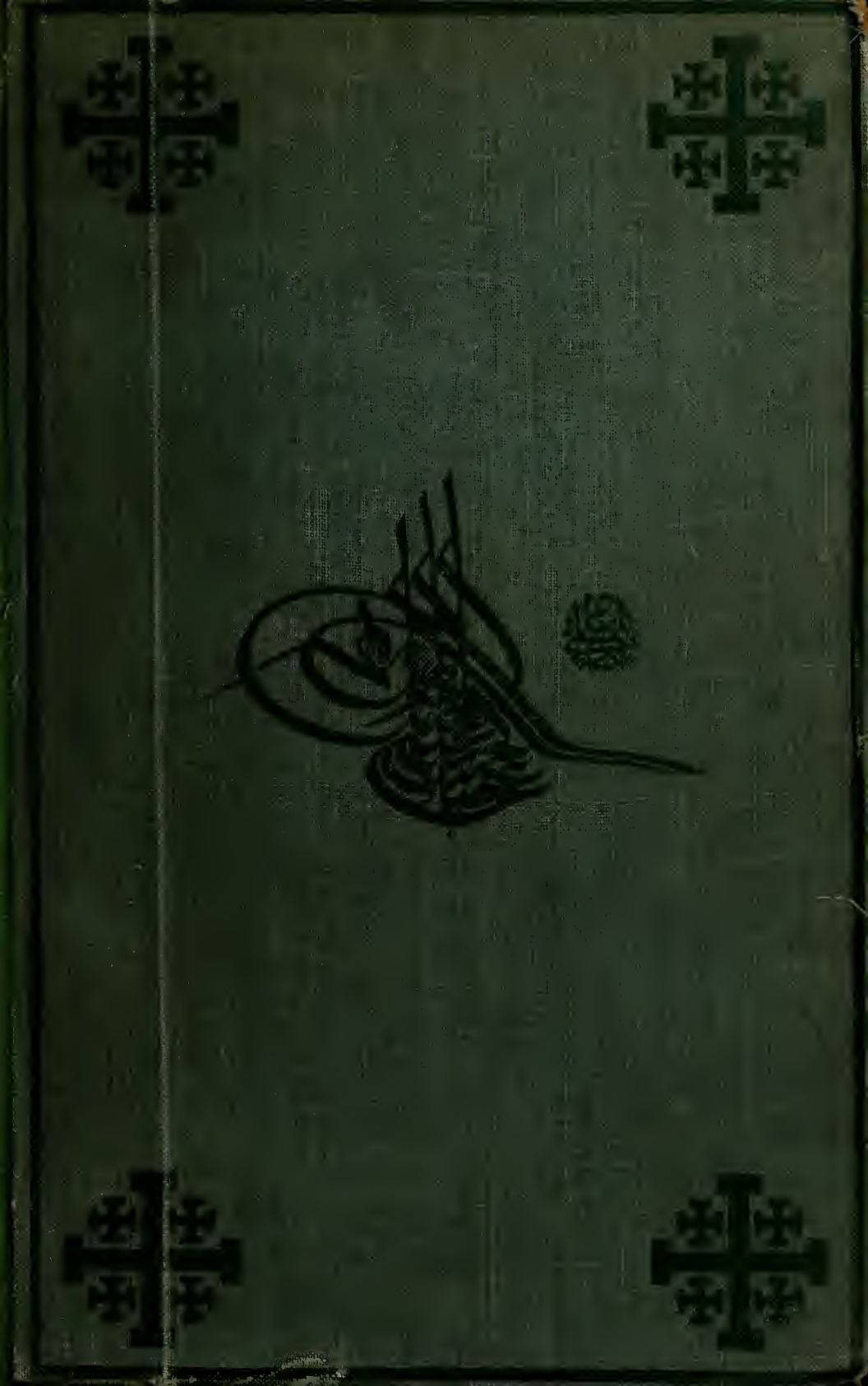

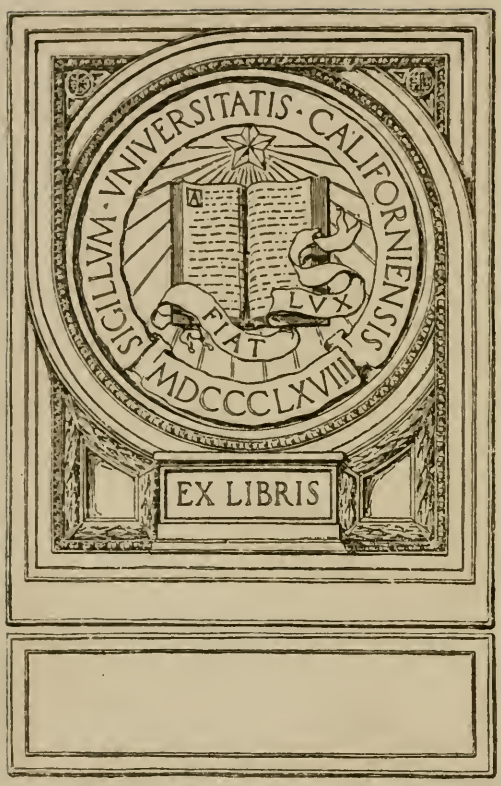
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PEASANT LIFE IN THE HOLY LAND

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NAZARETH.

Frontispiece.

PEASANT LIFE IN THE HOLY LAND

BY THE REV. C. T. WILSON
M.A. Oxon., F.R.G.S., F.S.A.
Vicar of Totland Bay, I.W.
Formerly of the Church Missionary Society, Uganda and Palestine

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

During the last forty or fifty years a flood of light has been thrown on the ancient history of Egypt, Babylonia, Syria, and the other lands so intimately associated with Palestine, as well as on that of the Holy Land itself, thereby illustrating and confirming the Scripture narrative. Towns and cities buried for thousands of years have been compelled to yield up their secrets to the spade of the explorer; the story of forgotten tribes and nations has been discovered; ancient languages have been re-learnt, and their records and literature, personal correspondence and private accounts, have been made accessible to the ordinary reader.

In another field of research, that of the manners and customs, language and folk-lore, of these Eastern lands, much has also been accomplished, but in both much yet remains to be done. The

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present work is a small contribution towards a fuller knowledge of the latter field.

The circumstance of a long sojourn in the Holy Land has given the author a somewhat intimate acquaintance with its inhabitants. The knowledge thus acquired he feels he ought not to keep to himself, especially as, unlike most of the records revealed by pick and spade, no inconsiderable portion is in danger of being lost through the changes which time is bringing on the land.

C. T. W.

TOTLAND BAY, I.W.,
January 23, 1906.

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PEASANT LIFE IN THE HOLY LAND

INTRODUCTION

An apology is needed for adding another to the long list of books on the Holy Land. My excuse is that the volume deals with the people rather than with the land, and that, too, from *within*. Many years' residence and work in Palestine have given me exceptional opportunities of seeing the inner life of the present inhabitants of the Holy Land, more especially that of the Fellahîn, of whom this work treats. I have been brought into closest contact with many of them, both Christian and Moslem, staying in their houses, joining them at their meals, travelling long journeys with them, seeking to enter into, and sympathize with, their joys and sorrows in all the vicissitudes of human life, and often, for days at a time, hearing and speaking nothing but their language. I have in many cases gained their confidence, I believe, and at the same time, while not forgetful of their shortcomings, I have learnt to appreciate their good qualities and to esteem some of them very highly.

It is a remarkable fact that nearly all the works

dealing with the Holy Land and the manners and customs of its people have been written, not by residents, but by travellers. There are undoubted advantages in this fact, but there are also grave disadvantages.

To the new-comer from the West, who obtains his first glimpse of Eastern life as he sets foot on the shores of Palestine, all he sees and hears comes with startling novelty. Every turn of the road or street, each group by the wayside, the long lines of camels winding down the valleys, the picturesque crowds of an Eastern market, the varied incidents of peasant life, all present brilliant pictures to eye and mind with a vividness and freshness which are apt to be much dimmed by long residence among these scenes and intimate familiarity with them.

But if we seek to get below the surface and to go more thoroughly into the habits and customs of the people, and to understand their thoughts and characters, much more is needed than even the most protracted journey through the country can afford.

Everything connected with that land which was the cradle of our holy religion or which throws light on the manners and customs which obtained there in olden days is of value.

To the Fellahîn (or peasants) of Palestine it is to whom we must chiefly go to-day to elucidate those manners and customs, and not to the Jews. The latter are, for the most part, strangers in their own land, immigrants from Europe or other continents, who bring with them the tongue, garb, and

ideas of the countries where they have been so long domiciled.

The Fellahîn, on the contrary, are probably to a large extent the descendants of the various Gentile tribes, who were never exterminated by the Israelites, but became a race of serfs, herding the cattle and tilling the land of their Hebrew conquerors.

Professor Sayce has shown that where a people has been wholly or chiefly commercial, they have been for the most part absorbed into, or dispossessed by, a conquering race, but that where they have been agricultural or pastoral the wave of conquest has passed over them, leaving them comparatively unchanged.

This has been the case in Palestine. Hebrew and Egyptian, Chaldean and Greek, Roman and Arab, have conquered the land; but the peasant descendants of the pagan tribes which dwelt there at the dawn of history have clung to the soil through all these changes. Bending to the storm, they were lost sight of for awhile, but reappeared as the country settled down after each invasion. Colonel Conder, writing ('Palestine,' p. 63) on this subject, says: 'The Fellahîn have been called "modern Canaanites," and if by this is meant descendants of the Semitic race which the Egyptians found in Palestine before the time of the Hebrew conquest, the term seems justified by what is known.'

The language spoken by the Fellahîn to-day is a Semitic tongue, viz., Arabic, closely related, not

only to Hebrew, Syriac, and Chaldee, but also to Assyrian, which latter the discoveries at Tel Amarna show to have been the literary tongue of the days of Abraham and the early patriarchs.

Such being the case, it will be readily seen that a knowledge of the manners, customs, and dialects of the Fellahîn of Palestine is likely to throw much light on those of the inhabitants of that land in Bible times, as well as on the scenes depicted and the histories narrated in the Sacred Volume.

It is of great importance, too, that the manners and customs now obtaining should be carefully studied and noted, as there is much danger that many of these will in a short time be lost.

We are accustomed to speak of the East as 'unchanging'; and when compared with Europe and America it is no doubt correct. Still, even so, this epithet is only relatively, and not absolutely true. In bygone times various things have been introduced from Europe and other lands, and become naturalized, and the same process is going on now. New ideas are in some cases readily adopted. Thus, when the railway between Jaffa and Jerusalem was built, it was a surprise to many that the people so quickly adopted it as a means of travel. The same remark applies with equal force to the postal system, telegraph, machinery, as well as to smaller articles of Western origin and manufacture.

Again, as a result of the modern civil code introduced into Turkey, chiefly through the influence of the late Midhat Pasha, agricultural land

has largely passed from the communal ownership of villages into that of individuals.

Material for clothing is being more and more imported from Europe, with the result that the native weavers cannot compete. As a consequence, the native industry is dying out. Thus, in a village I know, where a few years ago forty looms were in full work, only six are now to be found.

The ever-growing poverty of the people, due for the most part to the increasing burden of direct taxation, is making it less and less possible for them to live from the land. This tends to drive many, especially of the poorer or less thrifty of the peasants, to the towns to seek for work. It has led also to a great increase of late years in the amount of emigration, particularly from certain localities.

A great deal of variety still exists in the local dialects. This is due, doubtless, to the isolation of the different districts in times past; this, again, being the result of the difficulties and dangers of travelling. Fifty years ago a journey from Jerusalem to Es Salt (the ancient Ramoth Gilead), east of the Jordan, would have been considered a more serious undertaking than a voyage to America would be nowadays. The inevitable result was that there was hardly any intercourse between different districts, with the natural consequence of considerable variation in the words and phrases in common use in the several places.

An incident related to me when I had but recently come to Jerusalem (by way of encouraging

me in my study of the language!) will illustrate this. A man from Es Salt and another from Gaza had been spending the evening together at the house of a mutual friend. The man from Es Salt told a story which the other could not understand, until the host, who was acquainted with both parts of the country, explained it to him in his local phraseology!

This was probably an exaggeration. Still, the fact remains that the words in ordinary use in various parts of the country differ very considerably, though the greater facilities for travel of late years will tend to approximate the different dialects to each other more and more. Education, too, which, as will be seen further on, is making rapid advances, is having the same effect.

Local distinctions, words, customs, etc., are often strongly marked. It is not easy to say how they have arisen, but one possible explanation is, that the inhabitants of the various groups of villages where such customs, etc., obtain are descendants from different ancient tribes.

The variations in feature which can be noticed in different districts, and which are often sufficiently marked to enable a person conversant with the country to tell fairly accurately from whence a stranger hails, would seem to point in the same direction.

The small area in which peculiar customs occur, and the comparative isolation of these areas which still prevails, make it often extremely difficult to ascertain local customs and usages. Many of these

ES SALT.

To face page 6.

can only be discovered accidentally or by long residence in the particular locality. The people of neighbouring villages may be quite unaware of the existence of a certain custom, while only a few miles away it may be very familiar.

I have known intelligent, educated natives to be entirely ignorant of certain customs, and even to deny their existence, because they were not in vogue in their own particular district, whereas further inquiry or fuller acquaintance with other parts revealed the fact that they were perfectly familiar to others.

That being so, the fact that such-and-such a custom, or rule, or community, is unknown in the country generally is no proof whatever that it does not exist at all, as it may be confined to a small out-of-the-way group of villages, or to only one or two places. For instance, probably not one European resident in Palestine out of a hundred has ever even heard of the Baraghafeh (Chapter III.). It was many years before I knew of their existence, spite of the fact that they were in the district in which I was living and working.

Another difficulty in ascertaining accurately such manners and customs as are at all peculiar to the Fellahîn is that they are very sensitive about them, and are sometimes very uncommunicative on the subject. To a stranger, moreover, they are apt to repudiate customs of which they are at all ashamed, or which they consider to reflect on themselves in any way. Nor must the inquirer ever ask a leading question, or one which would at all show what

reply he expects. The Oriental always likes to give a 'pleasant answer,' *i.e.*, one which will coincide with the preconceived ideas of his interrogator. It is also useless to apply to the townsman for information about the Fellahîn, as he really knows very little of their manners and customs. There is no distinction of classes, as in England, but there is a very real one between the Medaniin, or townsmen, and the Fellahîn, or peasants.

Palestine is a land where the old order of things and the new meet together. The modern steamship frequents its harbours and roadsteads, the whistle of the locomotive wakes the echoes of some of its valleys, and the telegraph-wires stretch from town to town and bring the latest news of Europe and America to its cities hour by hour. Yet in its distant hamlets, secluded gorges, and barren wilderness, life is much what it was when Jacob fed his flocks on these same hills, or Ruth gleaned in the fields of Bethlehem.

A few years ago I went one morning to the railway-station at Jerusalem to bid farewell to some English friends. Three hours later I had stepped back fifty centuries, and was sitting in a Bedouy tent in the wilderness of Judea, welcomed by a sheikh clad, probably, much as Abraham was in those far-off days, surrounded by the sons of Ishmael, differing little in their appearance from their wild nomad ancestor, and conversing with them in a tongue which, though not identical with, is yet closely related to, that which the Father of

the Faithful spoke, and in which he communed with God on these same hills.

Whether or not the changes now taking place in Palestine are destined to be permanent time alone will show.

The following pages are an attempt to record some of the customs and manners of the Fellahîn as they obtain in the Holy Land at the present day, in the hope that they may thus be rescued from oblivion, and thereby fuller light be thrown on the Word of God, and also that Western Christians may be led to take a deeper and more sympathetic interest in the present inhabitants of that land where was lived

> 'that sinless Life,
> That breathed beneath the Syrian blue.'

CHAPTER I

RELIGION

THE Syrian peasantry are a particularly religious race. Religious topics form a frequent subject of conversation, and they will discuss abstruse theological questions, such as predestination, by the hour. But as one gets to know them better this religiousness, which at first greatly surprises a Western, proves in most cases to be very superficial. Such as it is, however, it enters largely into their everyday life and language.

Everything that happens to them, good or ill, is directly from God's hand. After telling one of some misfortune which has befallen them, they will conclude with the words '*El hamdu l'llah, el hamdu l'llah*' (Praise be to God, praise be to God). In all their troubles or misfortunes there is little or no looking at second causes. Even in cases where the trouble or misfortune is manifestly the result of their or someone else's carelessness, or where an illness has been brought on by their own sin or foolishness, it is invariably attributed to the will of God.

The name of the Almighty is continually

brought into their conversation. If on meeting a man one inquires after his health, the answer will almost always be, '*El hamdu l'llah*,' or, '*Ashkur er Rub*' (Praise God, or, I thank the Lord). Or if one asks another, 'Do you think it will rain to-day?' '*In shallah*' (If God wills), he will reply, or, '*Allah y'alam*' (God knows); or should the rain be much needed, a frequent answer will be, '*Allah karîm*' (God is generous). The beggar as he holds out his hand for alms whines, '*Allah y'uatik*' (May God give you)—*i.e.*, in return for what you are about to give me—or, '*Hassaneh l'llah*' (An alms for God); and on receiving anything expresses his thanks by '*Kethtir kheirak*' (May He—God—increase or multiply your goods), or by '*Yutowwil umrak*' (May He prolong your life), and similar phrases. Two friends have met on the road. On parting one will say, '*Allah yusahhil 'alek*' (May God make your road smooth for you), and the other will respond with the words, '*W'Allah yahfthak*' (And may God preserve you); and so on through every matter of daily life.

It will readily be seen that this frequent use of the Divine name too often degenerates into a mere form. Once when on a long journey a horse in my caravan cast a shoe, and on arriving at the next halting-place a farrier was sent for to replace it. He was a Moslem, and at every nail he drove into the hoof he uttered the formula, '*Attakil 'al'Allah*' (I trust in God), and could not see, when remonstrated with, that there was any irreverence in the constant repetition of these words. Whatever the

original idea underlying the use of such expressions, the practical result is too often the greatest profanity. Thus, one of the very commonest forms of the simple expression 'Yes' is really an oath by the name of God, and the way in which the Mohammedans will use that holy name when trying to make a person believe a palpable lie makes one shudder.

The great majority of the Fellahîn are by religion Moslems, or, as they are more commonly called in Europe, Mohammedans. The Moslem (more accurately, Muslim) is one who is surrendered to God, and his religion he calls 'Islam,' or 'Surrender.'* The Koran (literally, 'Reading') is his sacred book, and the chief, though not the only, source of his religion. This book is largely derived from the Old and New Testaments, which in theory all Moslems acknowledge. They also admit our Blessed Lord to be a Prophet, in some respects putting Him above Mohammed; and have the greatest respect for Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, and many of the Old Testament saints; but they deny Christ's Divinity and reject His Atonement.

* It is not possible to give within the limits of a work of this kind anything like a succinct account of Mohammedanism, nor, indeed, does it lie within its scope to do so. The student who may wish to pursue the subject further will find full information in such books as the following: 'Mahomet and Islam,' Sir W. Muir (R.T.S.); 'Koran,' Sir W. Muir (S.P.C.K.); 'The Dictionary of Islam,' T. P. Hughes; 'Religion of the Crescent,' St. Clare Tisdall; 'Cradle of Islam,' Zwiemer.

There are, as every student of Islam knows, numerous sects in that religion,* many of these being bitterly hostile to each other. In Palestine the Moslems are chiefly Sunnis, or orthodox Mohammedans, and belong for the most part, I believe, to the Hanîfites, followers of Abu Hanîfah, one of their four recognised divisions. In the northern districts, however, there are a good many Met'awali,† and here and there communities of a remarkable sect known as the Shazeliyeh or Shadaliyeh. The Mohammedan peasantry have but a superficial acquaintance, for the most part, with their own religion.

Their idea of God is a terribly low one, so much so that I doubt if it comes up to that of many heathen. Many a time as I talked with them have the words of the Prayer-Book version of Ps. l. 21 come to my mind: 'Thou thoughtest wickedly that I am even such a one as thyself.' Their idea of Him is too often that of a weakly indulgent Being who is to be cheated or coaxed into letting

* A recent Persian writer (a Mohammedan) states that there are seventy principal Moslem sects, each of which has several subdivisions.

† The Met'awali are followers of 'Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed. While accepting the Koran as Divine, they do not acknowledge Mohammed as the Prophet or Apostle of God, but accord that honour to 'Ali, who was the fourth Khalîfa or Imâm. They hold that God intended to give His revelation to him, but that the angel Gabriel, who was entrusted with the mission, by mistake gave the Koran to Mohammed instead of to 'Ali.

them into heaven on the Day of Judgment. 'Oh, I know about Saidna Isa' (the Moslem name for our Blessed Lord), said a peasant woman to a lady who was speaking about Him to a group of Mohammedan women; 'He will tell lies for us on the Day of Judgment.'

It is a remarkable fact that among Moslems there is no clerical order and no priesthood of any kind whatever. In most villages there is, however, a man called a *Khatîb*, or 'Exhorter,' as the word might be rendered. His duties are to act as *Imâm*—*i.e.*, to lead the prayers in the mosque on Friday (the day on which public worship is celebrated) and on other special occasions; to wash and prepare for the grave the bodies of all men and boys; while, at weddings, before him takes place the formal agreement between the bridegroom and the father of the bride, which constitutes the actual marriage ceremony. In the villages of Palestine the Khatîb is often the schoolmaster, and also acts as spy for the Government. As a class these men are ignorant and bigoted, but I have known many good and honourable exceptions.

Till recently every Khatîb received half a bushel of wheat yearly at harvest-time from each family in the village, but if unpopular he could not always obtain his due. A story is told of how the peasants of a certain village, who would not give their Khatîb his allowance of corn, were outwitted by him. He went round the threshing-floors from one man to another, but each put him off with some excuse,

and he returned empty-handed. The next Friday, when the hour arrived at which he should have been at his place in the mosque as Imâm, he was not there. The people waited, but he did not come. Some of the leading men went to his house to inquire the cause of his absence.

'I am not going to prayer,' was his reply. 'You do not say your prayers properly. You talk, and some rise up before I do.'

'Oh no! we will go through all the forms in due order, if only you will come.'

'I will consent to come and act as Imâm if you will put a solemn curse on everyone who does not say his prayers properly or who rises from the prostrations before I do.'

To this the elders agreed, and the Khatîb accompanied them to the mosque, where an announcement to this effect was made. The prescribed forms were then duly gone through to the closing prostrations. The Imâm bowed himself to the earth, and all the people followed his example. But when the words had been repeated he remained with his face to the ground. All waited in silence, but the Khatîb did not move. No one dared to rise, from fear of the curse. At last the people began to complain, and angry voices rose from the prostrate crowd. Then the Khatîb spoke:

'You would not give me my corn when I asked it yesterday, and I shall not rise till every man of you has paid me his dues in full.'

On hearing this a babel of shouts arose from the mosque, the men calling to their wives and children

to bring the corn. The crafty Imâm bade one of his sons see that each man's quota of corn was forthcoming in full measure. Not till this was done, and the floor of the mosque heaped high with wheat, were the unfortunate men allowed to rise.

Besides the Khatîb, there will sometimes be an *'Alim*, or 'learned' man, in the village. These *Ulema* are so called from the fact of their having studied in the great Mohammedan University of El Azhar, in Cairo, and are much looked up to by the people.

In addition to the Khutabeh and Ulema just mentioned, many Dervishes (or Derwishes) are found. They may be compared with the begging friars of the Middle Ages, except, of course, that the Dervishes are not celibates. They are generally distinguished by their long, loose robes and tall hats of various shapes and colours, as black, green, or drab, with or without turbans. They call themselves 'Dervishes' or 'Poor Dervishes,' or simply 'Poor' (*Fakîr*), synonymous terms, for Dervish is a Persian word derived from the term *Der*, which in that language means a gate or door, and implies one who wanders from door to door begging. This designation is used by the Dervishes themselves to show their dependence on the goodness of God and that they seek His bounty only. It is in this sense that the term 'Poor' (Fakîr) must be understood, and not as indicating their actual poverty.

They are divided into two main classes, known

as 'Regular' and 'Irregular'—in other words, those who have rules, or 'paths,' as they are termed, and those who have none. The 'Regular Dervishes' are also designated 'Travellers'—*i.e.*, those who are travelling along the road to heaven, this being the idea in which originated the name of paths, by which their rules, rites, and ceremonies are known. The 'Irregular Dervishes' are of two classes, one known as *Azadîyeh*, a term derived from the Persian word *Azad* (Free), while the others style themselves *Majathîb*, or 'Traditionaries,' because they profess to have received the special regulations or tenets of their orders by unbroken tradition, from the first Khalîfah, or 'Successor' of Mohammed, Abu Bekr, and the Imâm 'Ali, Mohammed's son-in-law.

When a man wishes to join any of these Orders, certain ceremonies take place, which are, usually, as follows. The postulant goes to the head of the particular Order into which he wishes to gain admittance, and says: 'Oh, So-and-so! I wish to repent to God by your hand, and to enter into covenant with you.' The terms on which the new member is to be admitted are then discussed. When these are satisfactorily arranged, the novice is solemnly bathed by the Superior. This ceremony over, the Superior usually spits in the other's mouth, it being supposed that he thus imparts his spirit to him. He is next formally invested with the *Zi*, or special headdress of the Order, and thenceforth is reckoned a full member of the Dervish body.

It is impossible to state with any precision the number, varieties, and regulations of the different Dervish bodies, partly because they are very numerous, and partly because some at least are esoteric, and do not divulge their peculiar tenets, rules, and rites, to any but those within the circle of the Order.

There are thirty-two recognised bodies of Regular and Irregular Dervishes, called for the most part after the names of their founders, and originating in various places and at different times, from 149 A.H. to 1164 A.H.—*i.e.*, from about the end of the eighth century A.D. to about the middle of the eighteenth.

All these men are regarded by the Moslems with the greatest veneration, and are considered specially holy, even though, as is sometimes the case, their characters are known to be of the vilest. On the other hand they are popularly considered to be extremely avaricious. One of the peasant proverbs runs: 'Quicker than the lightning's flash, like a Dervish at sight of gain.'

They are credited with the possession of special power in writing effective charms, and many of them trade on this, and on their reputed sanctity, sometimes becoming quite rich. Our Lord's injunction to the Twelve Apostles, 'Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses' (St. Matt. x. 9), was, in my opinion, directed against some such abuse of the miraculous power He had bestowed upon them, and not intended, as is commonly held, to forbid them to take any money

with them.* In short, He prohibited them from trading on the possession of these gifts, and from using them for their personal enrichment, instead of as proofs of their Divine commission.

In connection with this subject, it may be interesting to note that there is at the present time a very remarkable illustration of the missions of the Twelve, and the Seventy, in the case of the Mohammedan sect of the Shazeliyeh mentioned above. This sect has in recent years had a fresh impetus given to it by a remarkable woman in Southern Syria, who is considered a kind of prophetess among her adherents. She sends her disciples out for weeks at a time, to go about the country and preach the peculiar tenets of the sect. They are at home for the greater part of the year following their occupations of agriculturists, carpenters, weavers, etc., and for the remainder they go about from village to village, receiving no remuneration for the work, but subsisting on the hospitality of the peasantry, and teaching as opportunity offers.

But even on the ordinary acceptation of our Lord's command above mentioned, it would be a very different thing to the Apostles to what it would be to one in our present conditions of life and society, or to a Western going to the Orient. There is to-day very little cash in circulation in Palestine, and the same probably held good of our

* A comparison of the few passages in the New Testament where the word κταομαι occurs shows that it always has the meaning of 'acquire' or 'obtain.'

Lord's time. This is due to a variety of causes: it is owing partly to the custom, which obtains largely in the East, of hoarding coin; and partly to the fact that comparatively little money is coined. The want of it is, moreover, not felt nearly so keenly as it would be in Europe. A man may have vineyards and oliveyards, goats and sheep, several yoke of oxen, a good stock of wheat, oil, and dried figs, all he needs, in fact, for his daily wants, and withal have little or no ready money. Thus, for one to say, as St. Peter did to the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, 'Silver and gold have I none' (Acts iii. 6), would not necessarily imply abject poverty. It would also be in fullest accord, at the present time, with the condition of one such as the same Apostle, to have no ready money, either with him or in his house, with which to pay the Temple tax of the half-shekel (St. Matt. xvii. 24-27). To-day numbers of people in Palestine go long journeys with little or no money, and find hardly any difficulty, and see no hardship in so doing.

Not long ago I was travelling east of the Jordan, and on arriving at the bridge over that river, below Jericho, found it blocked by a large caravan from Moab, on its way to Jerusalem; the reason of the delay being that the owners of the caravan could not muster enough money among them to pay the small tax for crossing the bridge, and finally had to leave some articles in pledge with the custodian, to be redeemed on their return after the sale of their merchandise in the Holy City.

The village mosques, or Mohammedan places of worship, are for the most part miserable buildings, dark and dirty, with nothing whatever in their outward appearance to show that they are sacred edifices. They are absolutely devoid of furniture, unless this name can be applied to a few straw mats rolled up and put away in a corner till required. They may have a *Mihrâb*, or small apse-like niche, indicating the *Kibleh*, or direction of Mecca, towards which all Mohammedans turn their faces at prayer; but this is infrequent. Occasionally in the larger villages a more pretentious building may be seen, and one kept in better order, with now and then a *Mêdaneh*, the well-known chimney-like tower from which the *Muezzin* calls to prayer five times a day.* Some of these mosques (and many of those in the towns) have been Christian churches in bygone years. Usually the mosque, whether large or small, has a courtyard, shaded by one or more spreading trees, and in this courtyard during the greater part of the year the Moslems say their prayers, the village school is held, and the elders of the hamlet receive their guests; for the same building is very often both guest-house and mosque in one, and the guests eat and sleep in it or in the courtyard outside, according to the season of the year.

It has often been remarked that Islam is a creed

* The Arabic term 'Minaret,' which has practically become an English word, and is always used to designate these towers or steeples, is, as thus employed, quite incorrect, its real meaning being a 'lighthouse.'

without a sacrifice for sin. As far as Mohammedan theology is concerned, this is, I believe, correct. In Palestine, however, the yearly sacrifice of the *Dthahîyeh*, which is offered at the same time as the *Hajj* (pilgrims to Mecca) are slaying the victims at Mount 'Arafat, is regarded by the Moslem peasants as a *Kifârah*—that is, a satisfaction for their sins. In some villages, moreover, they put the blood of this sacrifice on the doorposts and upper lintels of their houses. In one village near Jerusalem I have seen many houses with the blood thus sprinkled on the doorposts, while some had in addition two of the victim's feet stuck in a hole in the door, these being left the whole year till the next feast comes round.

In two or three mixed hamlets (Moslems and Christians) with which I am acquainted, the Christians, either just before Lent or at Easter, kill a goat or sheep, and put the blood on the upper lintel in the form of a cross, and on the side-posts in spots. These villages are all situated in the district known as that of the Beni Zeid, whose Moslem inhabitants always observe this custom at the feast of the *Dthahîyeh*, as described above. The custom seems to be a very local one, but whether it has been derived by the Moslems from the Christians or *vice versâ* I cannot say.

In addition to this feast, several religious seasons or festivals are observed by the Moslems with more or less strictness. The most noteworthy of these is Ramadthân, or the month of fasting. In some respects it is a misuse of words to call this period

CARMEL (SCENE OF ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE).

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one of fasting, as in the case of the well-to-do Mohammedans they simply turn night into day, and throughout the month have a nightly feast on the daintiest dishes that Arab cookery can devise. With the poorer classes, but especially with the Fellahîn, the case is very different. The Korân directs that during Ramadthân neither meat nor drink shall pass the Moslem's lips from the time that it becomes light enough to distinguish between a white thread and a black one, until sunset.

The Fellahîn are, for the most part, very strict in their observance of this fast (much more so, indeed, than the townspeople), and when this month falls in the hot season, when the days are at the longest and the nights at the shortest, it is a very heavy burden to them. More particularly is this true of the prohibition to drink water, especially in harvest-time or when there is other hard labour to be undergone. In Jerusalem and other towns a cannon is fired at sunset, announcing to all the country round that the hour for food has come. I was once riding home to Jerusalem at the beginning of summer during Ramadthân. A shower of rain had fallen earlier in the day, and there were puddles in the road. Just at sunset I met some young men — Moslems — returning to their homes from their work in the city. As I came up with them the boom of the sunset gun was borne on the breeze from Jerusalem. Instantly one of them threw himself on his face on the ground and drank with feverish eagerness from a puddle by the wayside.

In the spring, about Easter, occurs the Moslem feast of Neby Mûsa, or the prophet Moses, which is largely attended by the Fellahîn from the district round Jerusalem and other parts of the country. It is a purely local feast, and is said to have been instituted as a kind of counter-demonstration to the gathering of Christian pilgrims from foreign countries at Jerusalem during Holy Week.

The feast lasts seven days, in the course of which the pilgrims visit the reputed tomb of Moses, which Moslem tradition places west of the Jordan, on the foot-hills in the Ghôr, about an hour and a half outh-west of Jericho. There are large buildings at the tomb for the accommodation of those who visit the shrine during the feast, thousands going there every year. The Fellahîn come up to Jerusalem in numbers from all the villages for many miles round, dressed in their best. Each company has one or more banners of red or green silk, embroidered with passages from the Korân, and is accompanied by the sound of cymbals and drums. They gather in Jerusalem some time before the feast, many of them being lodged in the Haram and its numerous buildings. On the opening day of the festival a great service is held in the Mosque of Omar, which building the Arabs call 'The Dome of the Rock.' This ceremony is attended by the Governor of Jerusalem and all the great officials, civil and military, and at its conclusion a long procession starts for Neby Mûsa with banners flying, drums beating, cymbals clashing, guns firing, and all the noise so dear to an Eastern's heart. Both

children and adults look forward to it as the one great holiday of the year.

Another local feast is that of Rubîn, a famous Wely in the maritime plain near the sea, and about two and a half hours south of Jaffa. The people encamp round the shrine in thousands, remaining for several days. These and similar gatherings are fruitful of disease. The herding together of great crowds in a small area, amidst insanitary surroundings, with often a scanty or polluted water-supply, is a frequent originator of epidemics, which are carried by the returning pilgrims to their own homes.

The traveller in Palestine will often see a little clump of trees with the white dome of a low stone building peeping out of the dark-green foliage, and on inquiring what it is will be told that it is a *Wely*, or saint—that is, his reputed tomb. These buildings are usually, though not invariably, on the tops of hills, and can be seen for many miles round, some of them, indeed, forming landmarks for a great distance. Who these *Ouliah* were is for the most part lost in obscurity; but the real explanation is that they mark the site of some of the old Canaanitish high places, which we know, from many passages in the Old Testament, were not all destroyed by the Israelites when they took possession of the land, becoming in subsequent ages a frequent cause of sin to them.

There is generally, but not always, a grove of trees round the Wely. The oak is the kind most commonly found in these groves at the present

day, as would appear to have been also the case in Bible times, especially in the hill country. Besides the oak—which is invariably the evergreen kind, and not the deciduous species of our English woods—the terebinth, tamarisk, sidr, or nubk (the *Zizyphus-spina-Christi*, sometimes called *Dôm* by Europeans), and other trees, are to be seen as well. Occasionally the grove is represented by one large solitary tree under whose shade the Wely nestles.

The shrine itself usually consists of a plain stone building, for the most part windowless, but having a *Mihrâb*, or prayer-niche. It is kept in fair repair as a rule, and whitewashed from time to time both inside and out. Occasionally a grave is to be found inside, under the dome, an ugly erection of stone plastered over, about 3 feet high, and frequently of abnormal length; that of the so-called grave of Joshua, near Es Salt, east of the Jordan, is over 30 feet in length.

Occasionally there is no building over the tomb, and in such case, where it is one of great sanctity, the most extraordinary collection imaginable of odds and ends is to be found on and around the grave, having been placed there by way of honouring the dead saint, and of claiming his intercession at the Day of Judgment on behalf of those who have thus reverenced his memory on earth. The most striking instance I have seen of this latter kind of Wely was the so-called tomb of Noah at Kerak, the ancient Kir of Moab, before the present conventional building was erected over it. The accompanying illustration gives some idea of its

A FELLAH.

SACRED OAK NEAR TIBNEH (JOSHUA'S BURIAL-PLACE).

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AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS ROUND A WELY.

COURTYARD OF VILLAGE MOSQUE.

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former condition, and of the marvellous assortment of old clay lamps, bits of broken glass, coloured rags, sticks, bones, and miscellaneous articles of every description, which had been deposited there by the votaries of the prophet. With the same idea many tie pieces of rag to the boughs of trees growing around a Wely, or, where there is no tree, to the bars of the windows (if there be one) of the shrine.

The Moslems stand in great awe of these saints, especially of the more famous of them, and often really fear them more than they fear God. Thus, they fully believe that should they swear by one of these shrines to do, or not to do, any certain thing, and should be false to their oath, some fearful calamity would overtake them, whereas to break a promise made in the name of the Almighty they consider to be a far less serious matter. With the same idea ploughs and other agricultural implements, bundles of firewood, and other articles, are often left under the shadow of one of the trees of a Wely, or within a considerable radius of the shrine. The accompanying illustration shows a number of ploughs round such a tomb in the Jebel Ajlûn far away from any village or human habitation. Things so left are quite safe, as they are considered to be under the protection of the saint; and should anyone dare to steal any of them, the Wely would speedily avenge the insult done to his name and shrine by some condign punishment.

In a few cases there is neither tomb nor grave, but only a sacred tree which tradition, handed

down from father to son, declares to be the site of some Wely, and which is reverenced accordingly. The Mohammedans consider it unlawful to use the branches of these trees for fuel, believing that were they to do so the curse of the saint would rest upon them ; and it is very remarkable, in a country where firewood is so scarce, to see huge boughs fallen from these sacred trees lying rotting on the ground. In one case only will the Moslems use such wood as fuel, and that is when, as is occasionally done, they make a feast at the Wely in the saint's honour.

The Christian peasants are not so scrupulous, and do sometimes employ the fallen wood surreptitiously, for domestic purposes.

On Thursday evenings, the day on which the Mohammedans visit the graves of their dead, little oil-lamps are often lit in the Welys in honour of the saints buried there. Some even of the Christian women, in the more ignorant and out-of-the-way villages, observe this custom.

Travelling about the country one often sees by the wayside little piles of stones a foot or eighteen inches high, formed of single stones, sometimes to the number of five or six, dexterously poised one on the top of another. These miniature pillars are in honour of some famous Wely, and are usually found at the point where it first becomes visible, or from which a specially good view of it can be obtained. As instances of these *Kanatîr*, as they are called, may be mentioned those a little above Bethel, where, on approaching from the north, the first distant view of Jerusalem is obtained ; and

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A VILLAGE EAST OF THE JORDAN.

KANATÎR.

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those below Jericho, about two-thirds of the way to the bridge over the Jordan at a spot whence the Moslem shrine of Neby Mûsa can be seen.* The idea of these pillars, as with the other modes of honouring the dead saint or prophet, is to obtain his intercession on the Day of Judgment.

In connection with this subject, it is noteworthy that the idea of intercession, whether of dead saints or of the living, is one deeply rooted in the minds of the people of Palestine. Thus, if they wish to ask a favour from a superior, they infinitely prefer to get a third person to intercede for them, to going themselves directly to the one who can grant their request. They find it very difficult to believe that, for instance, an English medical man in charge of a hospital will do his best for a patient, unless the latter bring with him a letter of recommendation from some mutual friend begging the doctor to use all his skill for that particular case. Many do bring such letters with them, to the great annoyance, sometimes, of the European doctor, especially if he be new to the country and unaware of this trait of the native character.

A very strong belief in *El Kadr*, or fate, exists among the Fellahîn. This is, of course, essentially a Mohammedan doctrine, but the Christians—that is to say, the more ignorant ones among them—are largely influenced by it. The orthodox Moslem holds that all the incidents of a man's life are pre-

* These are not by any means the best specimens of these pillars to be found. They are mentioned here as being those most likely to be noticed by travellers. The best I have seen are on much more unfrequented roads.

determined in the eternal decree of God, being written, though invisibly to human eye, on the forehead of each individual. Such a belief if followed to its logical conclusion would, of course, be destructive of all civil government by reducing men to mere automata, doing only what they had been before ordained to accomplish, whether good or bad, and mechanically carrying out a prescribed set of actions, thus depriving them of all true personality and moral responsibility. But the Oriental mind is not a logical one, and as a matter of fact, while holding this belief, a man will admit, if pressed, his own responsibility for his good and bad deeds, much as the average Western. This may be illustrated by one of their proverbs which runs: 'Don't throw your child from the roof, and say "Inevitable fate."'

In practice this doctrine, coupled with a general tendency to take things easily, causes both Moslems and Christians to be very lax about precautions of any kind. Thus, roads along the edge of precipices are often left without any protecting wall on the outer side, or with only one of the flimsiest description; houses, whose roofs are used almost as much as any part of them, are built without parapets; in times of epidemics the simplest and most ordinary precautions are neglected altogether, or, if begun, are quickly dropped. I have known more than one case where an intelligent man has built a house without a parapet round the roof, and, when one of the children was killed by a fall from it, to have merely remarked, 'Such was the will of God.'

The following story, which has given rise to one of their proverbs (a story which probably has its parallel in the literature of most countries), is told by way of illustration of fate:

There was once a certain widow who had an only son, to whom she was devotedly attached. One summer the cholera broke out in the village where they lived. The mother, fearful lest her son should be stricken, resolved to keep him shut up in her house so long as the epidemic lasted. Accordingly, she fitted up a recess in one of her rooms very comfortably, and carefully closed it in. Here she put her son, and waited on him most assiduously, hoping thus to keep him from infection. One day, when the grapes began to ripen, she went to the vineyard and gathered several bunches, which she brought to her son. Hidden in one of them was a small venomous snake, which bit the boy as he was eating the fruit, and in a few minutes he died. After a while the mother, coming to the recess, found her son dead, whereupon she broke forth in the following lines:

> 'What God had decreed has happened indeed.
> In casket concealed; thy fate unrepealed,
> In vain would I hide thee: death must betide thee.'

The doctrine of *Thowwâb*, or merit, is widely held by Moslems in Palestine. They believe that after death a man's good and evil deeds are weighed against each other, and that his future condition for eternity will be according as the one or the other preponderates. Anything, therefore, like

almsgiving, repeating the ninety-nine names of God, works of supererogation (such, for example, as praying more than the five appointed times in the day), making the pilgrimage to Mecca more than once, etc., are all considered to add to a man's chances of salvation or to affect his relative position in the world to come. I have several times heard Moslems thus account for the work of Christian medical missions and deeds of charity towards non-Christians, things which otherwise are utterly inexplicable to them, but which on the ground of accumulating merit are, they think, easily accounted for.

It is considered a meritorious action to put drinking water by the wayside for thirsty passers-by. In the plains, cisterns fed from deep wells by means of water-wheels are much used for irrigation; if near the edge of the road, these cisterns will usually have a tap for the use of travellers, with a trough below, so that both men and beasts can quench their thirst. One year, when the winter rainfall had been very scanty and the wayside springs near Bethel had dried up, the people of that village built a little hut by the road, in which they placed a large jar of water for the use of the passers-by, the jar being continually replenished throughout the long dry summer.

Usually classed with Mohammedans by Western writers, but in reality quite distinct from them, are the Druzes. They are found on Carmel and scattered about Northern Palestine, but their strongholds are the Lebanon and the Haurân (the

ancient Bashan), especially that part of the latter known as the Jebel ed Druze. Their religion is essentially an esoteric one, it being of its very essence to conceal its real doctrines from every outsider, of whatever creed. In conversation with a Moslem they profess to accept the Korân, and claim that in all fundamental matters of doctrine and practice they are one with the followers of Mohammed; but to a Christian, on the other hand, they would say that there is no practical difference between themselves and the Nusâreh.

The great majority of them, however, are probably in complete ignorance as to the real tenets of their own faith, these being only known to the small inner circle of 'Initiated' or 'Wise' (*Ulema*, as they are called), the great bulk of them being 'Uninitiated' or 'Ignorant' (*Juhaleh*). Women may be, and are, admitted into the inner circle of 'Wise,' but so fearful are they of their secrets being revealed that such women are not allowed to bring their infants with them to their religious gatherings after the latter are about a year old. These gatherings are held in a building called *Khalwah* (a word meaning isolated or retired), a plain, unadorned structure in some lonely spot, far from any human habitation. The only thing that to an outsider distinguishes the 'Initiated' from the 'Uninitiated' is that, while in common with Moslems both abstain from the use of alcohol, the former also never drink coffee nor smoke tobacco, whereas the latter are allowed to do both.

Little or nothing is known with certainty about

the doctrines or practices of the Druze religion. It is generally said, and I believe correctly, that they hold the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, but that is about the most that can be at all confidently affirmed.*

* One or two things I have quite accidentally ascertained point to the possibility of the Druze worship being a survival of the Israelitish calf cult. I mention this with great diffidence, and only as a possible hint to students.

SACRED TREE.

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CHAPTER II

RELIGION (*continued*)

THE Christians, who, next to the Moslems, are the most numerous of the religious bodies found in Syria at the present day, are the successors of those who lived in Palestine at the time of the Mohammedan conquest at the close of the seventh century A.D. When the Holy Land fell before the sword of Khâlid and the other Moslem generals, a considerable section of the population sooner or later embraced Islâm; but a by no means insignificant number refused to give up the faith of their fathers. Their descendants for generation after generation, spite of almost every conceivable inducement to renounce Christianity, notwithstanding nearly every indignity, civil, social, and religious, which a fanatical ingenuity could devise, although treated as scarcely human, and their lives held to be worth less than those of the cattle, yet clung with an intense, if often blind and ignorant, tenacity to what they believed to be the religion of Jesus Christ. Erroneous as much of that belief was and is, low, too, as they have sunk as far as all spiritual life is concerned, we cannot but honour

them for what they have borne for their faith in the past, and seek to help them now to rise to a purer conception and a fuller knowledge of what that faith really is.

It is difficult, even for those familiar with the East, to realize now the extent to which Christians were formerly made to feel their inferiority to Moslems. None but Moslems, for instance, were allowed to wear any article of clothing of a green colour, that being the sacred hue of Islâm, or even to use for that purpose material having anything of that colour in it. I have known of a case where four men savagely assaulted a Christian in whose *Kumbaz*, or long loose robe, they detected a minute thread of green. In the large towns Christians were not allowed on the side-walks, but had to keep to the centre of the street with the donkeys and other beasts of burden. In any place of public resort, such as a café, should a Christian inadvertently sit down on the right hand of a Moslem, he was instantly greeted with shouts of '*Ishmal ya Nusrâni*' (Go to the left, you Nazarene !). His evidence was absolutely inadmissible in a court of law, however much he might be respected even by his Moslem fellow-citizens. Within the memory of some still living, the written permission, which had (in towns at least) to be obtained from the local Kâdi, or magistrate, before the body of a deceased Christian could be buried, was couched in the following terms:

'I, So-and-so, give permission for the burial of the unbeliever So-and-so, son of So-and-so, the

damned, lest the smell of his corpse should injure a Moslem.'

It is not to be wondered if, in such circumstances, the bitterest feelings were cherished towards the Moslems. Scorn was repaid with scorn. Even now, though in the last fifty years matters have wonderfully altered for the better, much of the old feeling still remains, and in particular any attempt to win the Moslems to the faith of Christ is, by many of the native Christians, looked upon as casting pearls before swine.

Throughout Palestine proper the great majority of the Christians belong to the Orthodox Greek Church, which is probably the lineal descendant, as far as any community can be said to be such, of the local body of Christians of the first century. Some, however, I believe, consider the Syrian or Jacobite to be the true National Church of the Holy Land. The Orthodox Greeks are very exclusive, refusing not only to recognise the Orders of any other Christian community as valid, but also declining to admit their baptism as even lay baptism. I have been assured that should anyone wish to join them from any, even of the other Oriental communions, they would insist on rebaptism by a Greek priest.

In the Lebanon most of the Christian peasantry belong to the Maronite community. This is a distinct Church, with its own ritual, festivals, calendar of saints, Orders, etc., but in communion with the Church of Rome.

In a few places Armenians are to be found. In

doctrine they are Monophysites, but in other respects there is not much difference between them and the Orthodox Greeks. Indeed, their Church is in Palestine really a foreign one, consisting of congregations of the National Church of Armenia, the members being Armenians by race, and the services conducted in that language. They are distinguished from the other Churches in Palestine in the time of their celebration of Christmas. They keep this feast on the same day as that of the Epiphany and our Lord's baptism. In common with both Eastern and Western Christendom, they assign January 6 as the date of these two festivals, and, interpreting St. Luke iii. 22, 23, to mean that the Saviour was baptized on His birthday, they consequently keep that day as the Feast of the Nativity.

In addition to the Greek Orthodox Church there is the so-called Greek Catholic Community, a body which has split off from the former, and which is regarded by them as unorthodox and schismatical. They acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope as Head of the Church on earth, while retaining the distinctive rites and ceremonies of the Greek Church.*

* Besides the Greek Catholics, there are Armenian Catholics, Syrian Catholics, etc. These bodies are sometimes known as the 'Uniat Churches,' and are of comparatively recent origin. Wherever the term 'Greek' is used in this book, it is, unless the contrary be expressly mentioned, to be understood of creed, and not of race. It is unfortunate that there is no recognised term in English for members of the Greek Church as distinguished from those of the Hellenic race. In Arabic there is no such ambiguity, the former being known as *Rûm*, and the latter as *Yûnân*.

Besides the Oriental Churches, there is the Roman (or Latin, as it is called in the Levant) Church, which has in recent times established monastic houses, built churches, and gathered congregations drawn from these Eastern communions. All their distinctive characteristics are of Western origin, and therefore do not call for detailed notice in a work dealing specially with Oriental Churches and races.

There exist also a number of Protestant congregations, chiefly in connection with the Church Missionary Society of the Church of England. These congregations, though not large, relatively to those of some other Churches, yet exert a very considerable influence for good in the country, an influence much beyond that which their numbers would account for, and which is none the less real because it is often indirect.

In connection with the Greek Church in Palestine there is a large body of foreign ecclesiastics, who monopolize all the more important posts to the exclusion of native clergy. These foreigners are Greek by nationality, often knowing little or nothing of Arabic, the vernacular of the country. The monks at the present time are entirely Hellenic, and will not admit a native of the country among their number. The reason of this exclusiveness is that the higher Orders of the clergy are drawn from the ranks of the monastic Orders only. These foreign ecclesiastics consequently exclude the natives for the purpose of retaining the power and control of the Church in

their own hands. As is inevitable in such a case, there is but little sympathy between the two bodies of clergy, a fact which has worked disastrously, and is so working, for the welfare of the Greek Church in Palestine.

The *village* priests are for the most part natives of the country, and very frequently of the place where they minister. In the larger villages, however, where there are several priests, there is usually an Hellenic ecclesiastic over them, who is called *Reis*, or Superior. He is a monk, and may be, and, indeed, not infrequently is, *not* in full Orders, and consequently ecclesiastically inferior to the men over whom he rules.

The Greek clergy, unlike those of the Roman Church and of the so-called Catholic branches of the Oriental Churches, are allowed to marry, but should a priest's wife predecease him he is not permitted to marry again. The monks must all be celibates, and also the higher clergy.

The incomes of the village priests are small, and they receive them but irregularly. Their salaries, such as they are, are paid by the Patriarch in whose province they live, out of the revenue of the patriarchate, these revenues in the case of the Jerusalem patriarchate, which includes all Palestine, being very large. One priest, with whom I am personally acquainted, has a salary of eighteen shillings a month, which would be an average stipend in a small village; in the larger villages they receive proportionally more. This particular priest, as is often the case, lives in his

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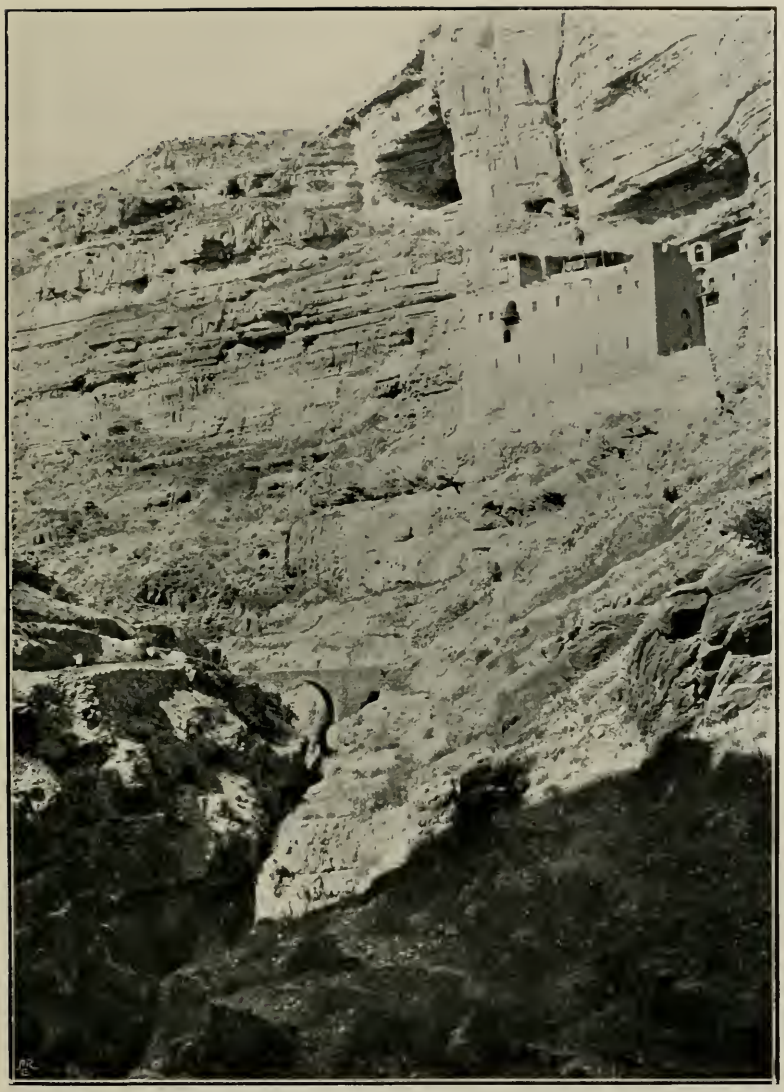

GREEK CONVENT OF MAR GIRIUS IN WADY KELT.

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native place, and has house, land, olives, etc., of his own; consequently whatever he receives as priest is in addition to what he has as an ordinary peasant. This renders him comfortably off, as comfort is reckoned in the East. In addition to the salary attached to the post, a Greek cleric receives fees from his flock at baptisms, weddings, and on other occasions; and should a sick person send for him, he expects to be paid for the visit, a bishlik (5½d.) being the usual sum!

As a body the clergy are for the most part very ignorant. There is no middle class from which to draw them; consequently they are of the same social position as the humblest of their flock, and at times inferior to many of them in education. One highly respectable old priest, whom I have known for many years, has more than once told me that all the education he ever had was six months at school, that he was then set to herd the cattle, and from this occupation was taken to be ordained. Such men, of course, never preach; indeed, preaching is almost unknown in the village places of worship, all that is expected of the clergy being limited, practically, to reading through the services. Notwithstanding these facts, the priests are treated with the greatest reverence by their people, not on account of their personal character, which, sad to say, in too many cases will not bear close inspection, but because of their office.

The dress of the Greek priests consists of a long black garment like a cassock, with a leathern belt round the waist, a black outer robe with full sleeves,

resembling a preacher's gown, and a tall black cylindrical hat, with a rim round the top. This rim distinguishes those who are in full Orders from the monks and others who have not yet attained to the priesthood. All Greek ecclesiastics, of whatever Order they may be, wear their hair long, this custom being taken from the law of the Nazarites (Num. vi. 5). It seems very curious at first to a Western to see these men with great masses of hair like a woman's. Formerly, instead of the cylindrical hat, a fez with a dark blue turban, similar to that still worn by the Coptic priests in Egypt, was the clerical headdress. This latter was, however, a badge of servitude imposed upon the Christians by their Mohammedan conquerors, and, with the waning power of the Turk, it has gone the way of other tokens of social inferiority. The higher clergy, when making a state call or when desirous of showing special respect to the person to whom a visit is made, put over the hat a long black veil, which flows down the back of the wearer nearly to the waist.

Infant baptism is the invariable rule in the Greek Church, and is always by trine immersion. It is followed by the chrism, both being administered at the same service. This latter rite is held by the Oriental Churches to be the equivalent of the confirmation of Western Christendom. It is customary, as with us, to have sponsors, and commonly the same persons will stand as godparents for all the children of a family. This is held to constitute a relationship, and to be within

the prohibited degrees of the Greek Church, so that the children of godparents may not intermarry with the latter's godchildren.

Some of the Greek churches are very ancient or on ancient foundations. Externally they are as a rule dreary, uncared-for-looking buildings, and inside they appear to be utterly neglected, and are too often far from clean. There are no pews, the congregation standing during the services, and, as these are very long, stout sticks with long cross-pieces at the top, like huge crutches, are provided for the people to lean on when they become weary.

A curious ceremony takes place at the consecration of a Greek church. Both the Patriarch of the province and the Bishop of the diocese in which the church is situated take part in the service. They bring with them a piece of a bone of a saint. This they proceed to boil in olive-oil in the church. The Bishop, wearing a white silk surplice, having completed the cooking of the relic with spices, takes a long reed with a sponge on the top, and, dipping it in the holy oil, makes the sign of the cross therewith on the roof, walls, etc., all round the building. Special prayers follow. These ended, he takes off his silk surplice and puts on another. After more prayers, appropriate to the occasion, he proceeds to say Mass. This ended, he takes the rest of the oil and the vessel (which must be a new one), and deposits it in some spot where it will be out of ordinary reach, as it is sacred. Finally the Bishop tears his silk surplice into small pieces, which he distributes among the congregation as a

blessing, the reason of this being that, as some of the holy oil has fallen on it, he may not wear it again.

For twelve hundred years after the Mohammedan conquest of Palestine the Christian churches were not allowed to have bells, the Moslems believing that they collect the evil spirits. As a substitute, bars of bronze, or some similar material, were used. These bars were suspended from a wooden frame, and when struck with a heavy mallet emitted a deep musical note, which could be heard to a considerable distance. In some few places, as, for example, the Armenian monastery in Jerusalem and the well-known Greek convent of Mar Saba in the Wady en Nar, these old bronze gongs may still be seen. Within the last century Christians have been allowed the use of bells, a concession which is looked upon by some of the stricter Moslems as a sad proof of the decadence of their faith.

Scattered up and down the country are large monasteries of the Greek Church. Usually they are to be found in lonely places, such as that of Mar Saba just mentioned, Mar Girius (St. George) in the Wady Kelt, the famous Convent of the Cross, west of Jerusalem, that on Mount Tabor, and many others. They are strongly built, and in outward appearance more like fortresses than religious houses, having been used in former times by the Christians as places of refuge when danger threatened. Though the need for them as such has now happily passed away, at any rate for the

present, they are eloquent witnesses to the risks which Christians had to run in days not long gone by.

Of the Christian festivals, perhaps the most noteworthy—at any rate from a Western point of view—is the ceremony of the Holy Fire (or Holy Light, to give it its true name), which takes place in Jerusalem, in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, on the Greek Easter Eve. The people are taught that this 'Fire' or 'Light' is miraculously produced each year, on that day, in the Lord's tomb, and great crowds come up to the Holy City to witness the ceremony. Candles or tapers lit from the sacred flame convey the light to the Christian villages within a good many miles of Jerusalem. These candles are, as soon as lit, rapidly passed to groups of men who are eagerly awaiting them outside the Church of the Sepulchre, and who immediately hurry off with the precious charge to their respective villages. It is esteemed a great honour to be allowed to carry this light, and in some cases certain families have the monopoly of the privilege, a monopoly which sometimes leads to fights between the bearers of the Holy Fire and people of other families who are desirous of obtaining the honour for themselves. In the villages, as the time gets near for the cavalcade to appear, people go out to some eminence near to watch the road from Jerusalem for the first indications of its approach, and any horseman riding by is eagerly questioned, 'Is the Light coming?' 'Have you seen the Light?' Ere long, in the

distance, is descried the little group of men carrying the precious flame, carefully screened from the wind. The shouts of the watchers send the news to the village, a solemn procession is formed, the Greek priests, in gorgeous vestments, go forth to meet the Light, and conduct it, accompanied by clouds of incense, amid all the noise and uproar inseparable from an Oriental procession, and with attendant crowds, to the church, where a service is held in honour of its arrival.

At Eastertide the Christians dye eggs in commemoration of the feast. Red is the colour ordinarily employed. The origin and meaning of the custom seems to be quite unknown to them, and the only reply I have ever been able to elicit in response to my inquiries—a reply perfectly satisfactory to an Eastern—is, 'Such is the custom.' The dyeing is effected by wrapping the egg in silk of the desired colour, and then boiling it, when the shell takes up the colour from the material. At Bethlehem the mother-o'-pearl workers dye eggs of a brown tint, and then very deftly etch some sacred design on them, removing with a sharp-pointed tool the thin coloured film, without, however, cutting through the eggshell. The children play a game with these Easter eggs. Two of them take an egg apiece, and each tries to crush in the end of the other's egg without cracking his own, and he who succeeds in accomplishing this feat keeps both eggs.

The Mohammedans have adopted this custom from the Christians, and at the feast of Neby Mûsa

(which, as mentioned in the previous chapter, takes place about the time of the Greek Easter) dye eggs of a bright yellow. At the New Year, at all great Church festivals, and at the beginning of every month, the Greek priests go round to the houses of all their flock and bless them. A vessel of holy water is carried by an attendant, and the priest sprinkles some of it on the house, at the same time saying, 'Save, Lord, Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance: grant our kings victory over the barbarians, and preserve by the power of Thy cross all who trust in Thee.' In return for this ceremony the householder gives the priest some trifling present—a handful of wheat, some dried figs, a few eggs, or anything else that comes to hand.

The Greeks, as a rule, observe the fast of Lent very strictly. They make a great point of eating olive-oil then; indeed, with the more ignorant ones this is the essential thing: without its use Lent would not be Lent for them. Olive-oil is used by all in their cooking, butter and other animal fats being strictly forbidden to them during that period.

There are many other fasts, and as a rule they are rigorously observed, especially those which occur before the great Church festivals. The days on which the fasts begin and terminate, together with the various saints' days, are announced each week by the priests in the churches on the previous Sunday.

Superstitions of all kinds abound among the Christians as well as among the Mohammedans.

Thus, if a child be ill, or long in walking through weakness, the parents will go round to the neighbours and beg some trifling thing from each house, as a fig, a piece of bread, an onion, or even an egg-shell or other worthless article. These they proceed to bury in a dung-heap, afterwards firing a gun over it, when they believe that the disease, or the spirit causing it, will leave the child. If a man be suffering from sciatica, an old woman, who must be past a certain age, has to go alone out of the little village and search for a kind of shrub known as *Shabrikeh*, a low, tough, thorny plant, a favourite food of camels. Having found one, she must, without uprooting it, so pull and twist it that the stem and roots become quite flexible; she must then place a stone on the plant and return to the village by a different way to that by which she quitted it, and the patient will be cured!

In a certain village in the Jebel-el-Kuds, if an ox, cow, sheep, or goat be lost, someone takes a Bible and reads aloud the twenty-third Psalm. As he utters the last word, another person shuts up a knife, razor, or dagger, which he has held open for the purpose: the knife, etc., must remain closed till the lost animal be found; otherwise it will be eaten by wild beasts!

The natives of Palestine are much afraid of the evil-eye. Blue or gray eyes are popularly supposed to be specially virulent and powerful, and are often thought to be capable of seeing into the ground, and detecting the hidden treasures which are popularly believed to be buried in all ruins. It is

considered most unlucky, especially by Moslems, to express praise or admiration of a child or animal, some untoward event being, in their opinion, sure to follow. The usual expression in lieu of praise or admiration is '*Mashallah*'—literally, 'What God wills'; and a fond father or mother will be as gratified at this as English parents at the warmest eulogium on their children.

The people seek to counteract or ward off the effects of the evil-eye by means of various things hung round the necks of children and animals, or in the former case fastened to the *Tarbûsh*, as the fez, or red cap, is called. These charms usually take the form of blue beads, discs of blue glass with white centres, in the middle of which is a black dot (the whole forming a rude representation of a human eye), or little bits of the same coloured material roughly fashioned to resemble a hand. This latter charm is supposed to represent 'the Hand of Might,' or the protecting power of God on the person. The colour is blue, from the idea, as mentioned above, that eyes of that hue have special power to injure both men and animals. In the case of new houses, the skull of some animal, with a few blue beads, is often hung over the doorway with the same object.

If anyone is believed to have been injured by the evil-eye, in order to ascertain who the individual may be who has done the harm, they take lumps of alum and heat them over the fire, carefully watching them the while. As the lumps break up under the influence of the heat, they

believe that in one or other of them they will see, and be able to recognise, the eye of the person who has cast the evil spell on them, and that the spell will at the same time be broken.

Charms of all kinds are extensively used, and implicitly believed in by the people. Most little children, but especially boys, will be seen with strings of them round their necks—the blue beads and eyes already mentioned, rude representations of a human hand in brass, or blue glass, bits of alum, queer-shaped pieces of bone, and other fantastic objects. Another class of charms consists of passages from the Korân, some of the ninety-nine names of God, or even meaningless hieroglyphics, written on pieces of paper and sewn up in square or triangular scraps of leather, which are worn about the person. Both Moslems and Christians have the greatest faith in these amulets, and those persons who are credited with special skill or power in writing them can make considerable sums of money by this means.

The written charms are usually the work of Dervishes, Ulema, and the like, but occasionally even women do it. I know of one woman in the Beni Zeid who has a great reputation in this respect, people coming to her from all the country round to purchase her charms. Regular treatises on the subject also exist (in manuscript), giving full directions how to prepare and write them. I possess a copy of one of these treatises, which once belonged to a Christian Fellah, who used, practically, to get his living by writing amulets for

the peasants, but who was shown the sin of it and induced to abandon the practice.

Augury is still employed to some extent, inferences being drawn as to coming events from the appearance of birds, animals, etc. For example, if an owl alights on a house at night, and hoots, it is believed to be a prophecy of the speedy death of the owner of the house. On setting out on a journey, it is extremely unlucky to see a raven or gazelle, but worse than all is to meet a woman carrying an empty water-jar. The idea in the latter case is that, as the jar has no water in it, so the day, journey, or enterprise, will be devoid of blessing, this omen being specially unpropitious in the early morning. A native friend of mine once told me that on a certain occasion he started very early one morning from a village where he had been staying. As he rode out of the place he met a woman with such a jar on her head. As he passed her she said aloud, '*In sh'allah melanch*' (God grant that it be full), the idea, of course, being to avert the omen. On another occasion two men, whom I know, were riding into a village, when they met a Moslem woman going out to the spring, and on her head her empty pitcher. As they came up to her, she thrust her arm as far as it would go into the pitcher so that it might not be empty!

But ill-omened as it is for an individual to meet a woman with an empty water-jar, it is more especially unpropitious for a wedding procession to do so, as this would be an infallible indication that

there would be no blessing on the married life of the bride and bridegroom. Should a woman thus meet a wedding, she will turn her jar mouth downwards on the ground that it may not be seen to be empty, or even, in some cases, she will break the pitcher to pieces.

In some of the more remote districts the people have a strong objection to being photographed. They have an idea that the picture of a man takes from him some part of his essence, and that he consequently becomes weak and enfeebled.

When the new moon is seen for the first time, many perform what is really an act of worship, or adoration, to it. They stretch out the right hand for an instant towards the luminary, and then bring it back to the mouth, kiss it, and then touch the forehead, at the same time saying, 'May God be honoured, and may you be honoured.' This is, I have little doubt, a survival of the idolatrous sun and moon worship once so common throughout the East, and a form of adoration as old as the time of Job (Job xxxi. 26, 27). This gesture is also employed as a token of respect towards a superior. Thus, a man who wishes to ask a favour will with his right hand touch the beard of the one whose help he intreats, and then kiss his own hand, this being equivalent to kissing the other's beard, and seems to have been a mode of honouring the images of heathen gods in Israelitish times (1 Kings xix. 18).

When a tooth comes out of itself, they throw it in the eye of the sun, saying, 'Take this donkey's

tooth, and give me a gazelle's instead.' Donkeys are in the East, as with us, considered very stupid animals, though they share this unenviable distinction with goats. Indeed, if they wish to say that a man is very obtuse or obstinate, they generally call him a goat.

There is a widespread belief in evil spirits of various kinds, jinns, ghouls, afrites, *et hoc genus omne*, so familiar to readers of the 'Thousand and One Nights.' They are popularly supposed to specially haunt corners of houses, and an Arabic proverb says, 'No corner but has its demon.' Caves also are often believed to be inhabited by them. In the country east of the Dead Sea, where the cultivated land is frequently a great distance from the villages, the Fellahîn, at seed-time and harvest, not uncommonly live for weeks at a time in these caves so as to be near their work. Before entering them they always sacrifice a fowl or some animal to the spirit of the place, in order to be on good terms with it.

In certain localities in the land of Moab, and other places east of the Jordan, hot springs occur. The Fellahîn are exceedingly fond of bathing in these natural Turkish baths, and many of them before entering the water make an offering of a fowl, the idea being, apparently, that the jinn who presides over the spring and controls the subterranean fires, which impart their warmth to the water, will not heat it sufficiently unless he be propitiated by an offering.

Insane people are supposed to be possessed by

these jinns, the ordinary term for such unfortunate individuals being *Majnûn*—that is one who has a jinn.

This belief in spirits is very firmly fixed in the minds of the people. When Kerak was first occupied by the Turkish troops, some twelve years ago, I remember an intelligent, well-educated native telling me, in all seriousness, that two ghouls had been caught in the old castle there, and been put in iron cages to be brought over to Jerusalem.

The religion of both Moslems and Christians is to a very large extent purely external. The former divide actions into *Helâl* (lawful) and *Harâm* (unlawful), and so long as a man abstains from the latter he is profoundly satisfied with himself. More than this, what may be called 'ritual actions' are often counted of greater importance than the keeping of the moral law. Thus, it is considered an 'unlawful' (*i.e.*, sinful) act to tread on crumbs of bread, and I have seen a Moslem dealer, whose every other sentence would be an oath, and who would never miss a chance of cheating a customer, most scrupulously pick up from the floor of a railway-carriage a few minute fragments of bread which a European traveller had dropped, lest he should inadvertently step on them.

Asceticism, also, in the matter of food, outweighs many a sin. I know a case of a man who is notorious among his fellow-Moslems for breaking nearly all the moral precepts of the Korân, who yet is held in high honour as a saint. His claim

to a reputation for sanctity rests on the fact that for years he is said never to have drunk any liquid whatever, obtaining the moisture necessary to maintain his body in health by eating water-melons.

In many cases both Christians and Moslems are intensely ignorant of their own faith. A Greek Christian, who came from a large village where there was but a handful of Christians among a considerable Moslem population, and where there was no resident priest, once said to me: 'We are very ignorant; the only difference between our women and those of the Moslems is that the latter swear by the Prophet, and ours by the Virgin.'

One result of European missions in Palestine has been to stir up to some extent the native Churches to care for the education and instruction of their own people, yet the present condition of their flocks in this matter still leaves much to be desired.

Prayer, as taught in the Bible, is but little known by Mohammedans and the more ignorant Christians. In the case of the former it would be within the mark to say that in the great majority of instances the externals of prayer are the all-important thing. The doctrine of fate, mentioned above, must if followed to its logical conclusion render all real prayer nugatory.

The majority of Moslems are very strict about their devotions, carefully observing the hours of prayer. Wherever they may be at such times, in shop or vineyard, building-yard or cornfield, on

board ship or riding across the country, they stop their work, take off their shoes, spread their outer cloaks as prayer-mats on the ground, and then repeat the prescribed formulas and go through the ordained prostrations. Before prayer, the face, feet, hands and arms (as far as the elbows), must be washed with water, or, failing that, cleansed with sand. Without this preliminary purification they hold that God would not hear.

The sight of a large number of Moslems at prayer, led by their Imâm, standing in long silent rows, prostrating themselves on the ground simultaneously, or bowing in unison with the precision of a regiment of soldiers at drill, is a very impressive scene; but prayer, in the Christian sense of the word, it emphatically is *not*. The repetition of the *Kalimah*, or Moslem formula of faith, 'There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God,' the recitation of the first chapter of the Korân, and certain other formulæ, constitute the sum total, in a Moslem's mind, of the worship required of him.

It must be confessed that the more ignorant members of the Oriental Churches are almost equally in the dark as to what true prayer is. A few on rising in the morning say, 'O Gate of God, O Opener (of the day), O Wise One, O Provider, O Generous One!' but beyond this I fear it must be said that individual, personal, private prayer is unknown to many.

CHAPTER III

VILLAGE LIFE

The villages of Palestine are for the most part—at least, in the hill country—on or near the ancient sites; and some not only occupy the same spots, but also bear practically the same names, they did thousands of years ago, at the dawn of history. The sites of these ancient towns and villages were largely determined by physical conditions, such as a position easily defended or the proximity of an abundant water-supply. In the hill country the former reason seems to have been the one which was chiefly taken into account, and consequently most of the present villages and hamlets are on the summits of rocky knolls or outlying spurs, sometimes in most commanding situations, with magnificent views over wide stretches of country. Those in valleys are almost invariably close to a copious spring of water.

The villages in the hills are much more substantially built than those in the plains; stone of good quality, and easily worked, abounds, and where a hamlet occupies an ancient site, old materials are often worked up again, and in such

places one frequently sees finely-dressed blocks, fragments of pillars, capitals of columns, etc., built into the walls of newly-erected houses. Some of these stones may have come down from the earliest times, and have been used by Canaanitish, Jewish, Greek, Roman, and Syrian masons in succession.

Not infrequently the summit of the knoll is occupied by the remains of an old town or castle, the village being built round it, the gray houses sometimes clinging, as it were, to the rock, and at a distance so like it that often it is difficult to tell which is rock and which is ruin or dwelling. The houses are, as a rule, built closely together, narrow courtyards or winding alleys alone separating them from each other. This is often due to the contracted site or steep slope of the ground, but sometimes to the need of protection, the smaller the circuit of the village the easier being its defence, and some of these villages before the invention of artillery must have been almost impregnable.

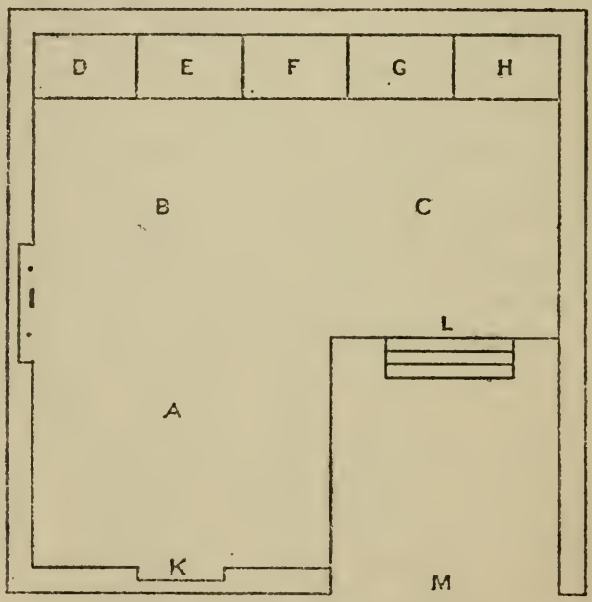
The villages in the plains are not uncommonly situated on a slight elevation, but, as building stone is not to be had within reasonable distance, the red earth of the plains is made sometimes to do duty in its stead. Some of these villages are very picturesque, especially in the spring-time, with the low red-walled houses, their flat earthen roofs covered with a rich crop of grass, hedges of prickly-pear surrounding the place, a few tall date-palms growing amongst the houses, and a pool of water, left by the winter rains, filling what otherwise

would be an unsightly pit, produced by digging clay for making the houses or covering the roofs.

In building a house, local conditions will very much influence the style and nature of the construction, and materials used. In the mountains timber is very scarce and stone abundant. This has led to the adoption of domed stone roofs, and the heavy nature of these roofs has obliged the building of very substantial walls in order to withstand their thrust, a thickness of 3 feet being quite common, and in many cases more is needed. The houses for the most part consist of but a single room. The interior is usually in two parts—a raised portion, called a *Mustabeh*, occupying some three-quarters of the space, and a lower part near the door. On the Mustabeh the family live, and underneath it a horse, one or more donkeys, a cow, or goats, will be stabled at night. Farm implements, firewood, charcoal, etc., with fowls, will also find accommodation there. On the raised part, too, will be the bins where the corn, dried figs, lentils, and such-like stores, are kept. In an arched recess in the thickness of the wall the bedding will be piled away during the day. Holes made by leaving out a stone here and there occur in the inner courses of the walls, and these contain various articles of household use, while between the stones pegs are driven, on which are hung baskets, straw trays, gourds, etc.

In some cases a small window or opening is made high up in the wall, but very often there is no aperture other than the door, the reason of this

having been the insecure state of the country in years gone by, windows being considered to give too great an opportunity to an enemy. And even now, though matters are in this way much improved, and life is more secure in most places, yet still this idea is to some extent justified. Not so very long ago a man, one night, climbed up to the window of a house in Bethlehem and shot his enemy, the owner, dead as he lay asleep in bed.



The above plan is that of a typical native house in the hill country, west of the Jordan. A, B, C, is the Mustabeh, or raised part, where the family lives; D, E, F, G, H, a row of cornbins; I, a sort of hearth, with sometimes, but by no means always, a rude chimney in the thickness of the wall; K, the

AN ALÎYEH.

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recess for the bedding ; L, the steps, if any ; M, the doorway.

Such is the ordinary type of house in which the average class of peasants dwell. The well-to-do will have more than one room, though all the rooms on the ground-floor will be of similar type. while the poorest class will live in mere hovels, built very roughly, sometimes without mortar, the whole floor being on a level with the ground. In more recently built houses, especially where the owner is well off, the style will be more like that of the towns, with no Mustabeh, and with fair-sized windows with glass in them, and perhaps outside wooden shutters.

An *Alîyeh*, or upper room, as the word means, is not unfrequently built on the top, especially for sleeping in during the summer, being cooler than the house below. Sometimes the guest-room of a village will be an Alîyeh. The little chamber (2 Kings iv. 10) made by the Shunamite for Elisha was an Alîyeh ; and as such rooms are generally reached, not through the house, but by an outside staircase from the street, he would be able to come and go without in any way intruding on, or interfering with, the family. Occasionally these 'summer rooms' (Judg. iii. 20) will have only four walls, the roof being formed of a vine trained over it for the purpose, or a shelter of boughs of trees—such places, of course, being only used in summer.

The building of these houses, especially where they are to be more than usually substantial, or where the owner is poor, is often spread over

several years. When a man has decided to build, he begins by collecting stone for the purpose. The rock of Palestine is mostly limestone, of which there are several kinds suitable for building. The best is a very hard kind, which is sometimes of a reddish colour, but more commonly a cream tint, and is capable of taking a fine polish; it is generally known as *Mizzeh.* There are two sorts of it—*Mizzeh yahûdeh*, the hardest stone of the country, and *Mizzeh helû*, a softer variety. Next comes *Kâkûleh*, a fine white freestone which cuts readily, and yet is hard and strong, and is much used for angles, cornices, mullions, etc., wherever, in fact, the stone has to be accurately dressed or carved; then *Malikeh*, a softer freestone not so durable; and lastly *Nâreh*, a very light, soft, chalky material, used only for the domed roofs.

Having collected stone, the foundations are dug, and in the hill districts are almost invariably carried down to the rock, which is rarely at any great depth below the surface. In the plains, on the other hand, it is sometimes impossible to get down to rock. The mortar consists of earth and lime, the Palestine builders not considering it necessary to use sand; the earth dug out of the foundations, supplemented by soil from the adjoining fields, being deemed sufficient. As the shape of the stones is irregular, much more mortar, in proportion, is required than in Europe, and, owing to the scarcity of water in most places, this forms one of the most serious items in the cost of building a house.

In making the walls, a row of stones of uniform thickness on the outer face is carefully laid on the foundation by a master-mason, forming the outer surface of the wall, a similar row being laid to form the inner one. But as, except on the face, the stones are very uneven, an irregular space is left down the middle for the whole length of the wall, and this, as soon as the two outer rows are laid, is filled up by another workman with mortar, and small rough stones, known as *Debsh*, gathered from the land: thus the course, or *Midmâk*, is made level for the next one.

The roofs in many parts are, as already mentioned, of stone, and dome-shaped. These domes are cleverly made, some builders, particularly those of Bethlehem, being noted for their skill in this department of their trade. To form these roofs, the walls of the room are not finished off at the same level all along, but, on the contrary, each wall ends in a more or less pointed arch. Then, if the room be a small one, the interior is filled up with a domed-shaped mass of earth on which the roof is shaped, the earth being afterwards removed. Where the space is too large for this method to be adopted, a number of stout poles are procured and fixed upright in the room, and an elaborate framework of sticks of the shape of the intended roof is made on these poles or pillars, the framework being covered with grass, and this again with mud, thus forming what may be called a mould of the inner surface of the dome. As soon as this is dry the building of the roof takes place. Pieces

of the Nârch, or similar light stone, roughly wedge-shaped, are used, and when the whole dome is completed it is left for a few days to settle, the supports being afterwards removed, when it is found to be perfectly firm and solid.

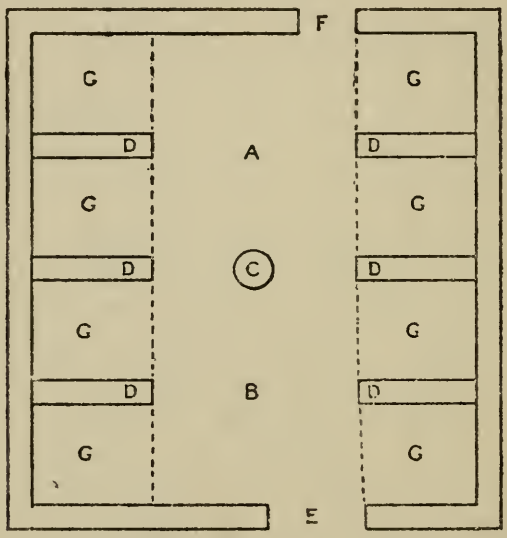
It is a common custom, when anyone is thus roofing a house, for all the neighbours to come and lend a helping hand, carrying up the stone, mortar, etc., to the masons engaged on the work, so that even a large dome will be completed in the course of a few hours, it being a great advantage to have the whole done in as short a time as possible. Those who thus help do not receive payment, but the owner of the house makes a feast for them in the evening. These occasions are greatly enjoyed by the women and children, who shout and sing and clap their hands, so that all the village knows when a house is being roofed. After this is finished, the roof is completed by carrying up the walls for two or three courses above the spring of the dome, filling up the corners with masonry, and covering the roof with earth; or instead of earth a kind of rubble is sometimes used, consisting of a sort of fine gravel mixed with lime, and where well done it forms a very hard and water-tight roof. Where only earth is used, it is laid on to a considerable depth, and trodden or rolled hard, and if properly done is wonderfully water-tight. It must, however, be well rolled each year in the autumn, before the rains, as a rank crop of grass often grows there in the spring, on which goats may sometimes be

seen grazing, and the roots of which loosen the earth, thus rendering it pervious to the rain unless it be well rolled.

In some districts a kind of white clay, called *Howwâr*, is found, which makes an excellent covering. It is mixed with water and crushed straw, being laid on pretty thickly, and as it dries it is well rolled. It is, when carefully done, very effective and very durable. Roofs are also covered with large flat paving-stones laid in cement. When well laid, this forms the best protection from rain and snow, but it requires constant watching, as, in the hills, frost and snow in the winter destroy the cement between the joints, and as a result there is much leakage.

East of the Jordan, owing to the greater amount of suitable timber, the houses are not so substantially built, as the roofs are flat, and consequently the pressure is vertical. In the case of a small house, one or more stout beams called *Homarah* (lit., a 'she-donkey') run from end to end, the longer way of the room. Across these a number of much lighter rafters are laid; on these, again, are reeds, secured side by side as closely as they will go, and on the reeds a quantity of the Netsh bush already mentioned; while over all, earth, to the depth of a foot or eighteen inches, is piled and rolled hard. These roofs do not as a rule last long, unless fires are lit fairly often in the room; for a kind of small weevil takes up its abode in the reeds and rafters, boring innumerable small holes in them, and soon

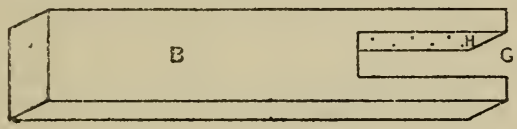
destroying the roof. One soon sees if they are at work, as, when this is the case, a light powder, like very fine sawdust, falls on everything; while at night, when all is quiet, the sound of the jaws of the tiny insects busy at work can be distinctly heard. If, however, fires are lit in the room, the smoke keeps the weevils away, and where this is done the roof lasts a long time.



The plan of the larger houses in Moab and other parts of Eastern Palestine differs consequently somewhat from that already given. In the above plan of a house I have more than once stayed in, east of the Jordan, A, B, is an open space in the middle of the house; C, a hearth; D, D, etc., are arches of stone on which the roof rests, the space being too great to allow of single beams being used; E is the main door, with a courtyard; F,

a smaller door; G, G, etc., are the spaces between the arches. The floors of these spaces are usually raised two or three feet above the rest of the room, and on them the family live, or else they are occupied with sacks of corn, sometimes piled up to the roof, or on them are stored agricultural implements, household utensils, and the general possessions of the owners.

The doors are as a rule strong, and roughly made; the hinges are generally formed by projections at top and bottom, from the plank which forms the inner edge of the door, these projections working in two holes, one in the upper and the



other in the lower lintel. Rough iron locks are a good deal used, but the old form of wooden lock, which has been in vogue for thousands of years, is still by no means uncommon. The principle of these locks is decidedly ingenious. The end of the wooden bolt (B) furthest from the wall has a deep groove (G) in it for about a third of its length; above this groove are several holes in a regular pattern (H). In the block through which this bolt runs are a number of iron pins, corresponding in number and pattern with the holes in the bolt, and so arranged that when the bolt is pushed home the pins drop into the holes and prevent its return.

The key with which it is opened consists of a piece of wood which will go easily into the groove, and having on its upper surface a number of small pegs exactly corresponding in number and pattern with the holes in the bolt, the length of the pegs being precisely the same as the thickness of that part of the bolt in which are the holes. Thus, when the key is fitted into the bolt and pushed up, the pegs lift the pins clear of the bolt, which can then be drawn back and the door opened. It will be seen that no key is needed to shoot the bolt, and this will explain how Ehud, after killing Eglon, was able to lock the door where the dead King lay (Judg. iii. 23), and thus gain time to escape, for, of course, no one can draw back the bolt without the proper key. The lock is ordinarily placed on the outside of the door, but sometimes on the inside, and where this is done a hole is cut in the door to admit the hand and key, a custom referred to in Cant. v. 4.

House-tops play a very important part in village life in Palestine. In the hilly districts the one-storied rooms are often built back to the side of the knoll, or hill, on which the village stands; or where it is in a valley, a perpendicular rock surface will occasionally be utilized as one of the walls, and the roof will thus be on a level with the street above. Where such a village is dependent on the rain for its water-supply, the roof will be made flush with the roadway, in order to get a greater area from which to collect the water for the cistern below. When this is done, it is often impossible

to tell from above where the street ends and the roof begins. Once when starting from Madeba, in the Belka, in the small hours of a dark winter's night, I twice found myself and my horse on the roof of a house instead of in the street. In other cases the roadway has gradually risen to the level of the roofs. This is caused by the habit the Fellahîn have of throwing the ashes from their ovens and the sweepings from their floors into the little narrow lanes of the village. In the lapse of centuries this rubbish has slowly accumulated to such an extent that the surface of the court-yards, once level with the street, is now several feet below it, and the latter has so risen that it is almost, if not quite, on a level with the house-tops.

The roofs, although really domed, as already described, are not unfrequently afterwards levelled up so as to make them quite flat, or sloping slightly to one corner to throw off the rain more easily. They are put to an infinite variety of uses; thus, in a village built on the side of a particularly steep valley, where it was almost impossible to find a flat space, I have seen a house-top used as a threshing-floor. Where the house is not built against the hillside, faggots of brushwood, used by the women for firewood, are often piled up on the roof for safety. During the sesame harvest the green stalks, with their long, narrow seed-pods, are stacked there to dry. Olives are spread out to mature before being crushed, and the housewife will keep her spare

jars there. During the dry season I have seen goats and sheep folded there at night, and in the hot, sultry nights of summer the whole family will frequently sleep on the house-top.

The good-wife builds her cornbins, moulds her huge water-jars, dries her *Bûrghal*, and does various other household tasks, there. After sunset in the summer evenings, the men will often bring their long pipes and smoke here, discussing the day's news or work, and enjoying the cool breeze. Should a quarrel be going on, or a fight, or an attack on the village be imminent, all the villagers will be upon the roofs (see Isa. xxii. 1), which command a much better prospect of what is going on than can be obtained in the narrow, crooked lanes; and I have known of more than one treacherous murder, and attempted murder, where the murderer has, from the house-top, thrown a heavy stone on the skull of his unsuspecting victim passing below. When an announcement which concerns the village generally has to be made, one of the elders mounts to an elevated roof, and, in tones which can be heard all over the place, tells his news or issues his orders (St. Matt. x. 27).*

In the case which has been already mentioned,

* The following is the formula with which the announcement is made: 'O thou that hearest the voice pray in the name of Mohammed'—(or 'of Christ,' if it be a Christian village). If there are both Christians and Moslems, the crier says: 'Let the Moslem pray in the name of his Prophet, and the Nazarene in the name of his Friend, the matter is such and such.'

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SHEPHERD AND SHEEP.

ROMAN BRIDGE OVER THE JORDAN.

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of a number of rooms built on to each other for a family of sons, the roofs will join, though sometimes at different levels. In some cases these roofs are reached from the streets by an outside staircase—a circumstance which explains several points in the New Testament. Thus, for example, when (St. Matt. xxiv. 17) the man on the house-top is warned not to go down into his house to fetch anything, the thought clearly is, that he is to escape instantly, so close at hand is the danger, descending into the street at once, and not going round into his house: otherwise this trifling delay would cost him his life.

Again, in the healing of the palsied man, the Saviour was, I hold it, in the *courtyard* of a house, standing, very likely, in the doorway of one of the rooms opening into it, this courtyard being so full that the four men found it impossible to get their sick friend near Him. Mounting by the staircase from the street to such a roof as has been described above, they easily reached the spot above that where Jesus was standing. Here a further difficulty met them: the house, in accordance with the Mosaic law (Deut. xxii. 8), had a parapet round the roof, unlike many of the houses of the Fellahîn to-day, and it was impossible to lift him safely over it, and let him down into the courtyard below. This parapet was, however, not of a very substantial nature; like many such in Palestine to-day, it was composed of tiles (St. Luke v. 19). These tiles are, in shape and size, somewhat like those used in England for draining fields, except

that they are much thinner. They are laid, with mortar, lengthwise, one above another (the thickness of the parapet being the length of the tile), a light, strong wall being thus produced, which allows the breeze to pass freely, and permits those on the roof to see something of what is going on around, without being themselves visible. This parapet being gone, it was easy enough for the four men to lower the mattress on which the palsied man lay, down to the spot where the Lord stood.

Cisterns are much used for storing rain-water collected from the roofs, courtyards, and streets of the village. They are made in the ground and, in districts where the supply of water is obtained entirely from them, it is common for anyone who wishes to build a house to make a cistern the previous year, both in order that he may have water for building, and also because the water gathered the *first* year in it is not considered wholesome.

Many villages have no other water-supply than these underground cisterns, and old sites are often honeycombed with them. Sometimes a hole has to be dug on purpose, but not unfrequently one caused by getting stone is utilized for the purpose. Round the interior of the hole a strong wall is built, and, resting on it, a domed or barrel-shaped roof, similar to those of the houses, a square opening being left through which to draw water, and sufficiently large to allow a man to pass through when the well needs to be cleaned. The floor

PARAPET OF "TILING."

A SHOP IN MOAB.

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slopes slightly towards a spot immediately below the mouth of the cistern. The whole of the inside is then thickly plastered with lime and earth, and, when nearly dry, a coating composed of lime, ground pottery, and sand, is given to the plaster. In process of time this becomes intensely hard and perfectly water-tight. These cisterns should, even in the most favourable circumstances, be cleaned out every few years, as a considerable amount of dust is carried down into them from even the best-kept roofs.

The natives almost always use buckets in the villages with which to draw the water, and these are infinitely preferable to pumps, as each time the bucket descends it carries with it a certain quantity of air, which helps to keep the water sweet and prevents its becoming stagnant, whereas a pump has no such good effects.

In years of abnormally short rainfall in these villages, which depend entirely on rain-fed cisterns for their water-supply, when these are nearly exhausted, there is a good deal of stealing of water in the dark; and in order to prevent this, I have known people to spread their mattresses at night on the mouth of the well, as it is called, and to sleep there.

The village shop, as in more civilized lands, plays an important part in village life. In all but the smallest hamlets, one or two of these shops are to be found, while in the larger places, especially those that are centres of trade, there will be many of them. Here may be bought

articles of clothing of native manufacture, calicoes from Europe, red shoes, striped kerchiefs for turbans, coloured cottons and silks for embroidering their gala dresses, heavy cloaks, and sheepskin coats. The housewife will find rice, coffee, sugar, tobacco, soap, petroleum, matches, etc. In the larger villages, besides these things, one can buy native hardware, felt for saddle-cloths, nosebags and hobbles for horses, certain drugs, powder and shot, flint and steel, and a variety of miscellaneous goods. In the better shops the articles in which the owners deal will be kept in rough shelves, made of the wooden cases in which the tins of petroleum are imported from Russia. These boxes, about 18 inches long, 15 deep, and 9 wide, are laid on their sides in rows one on the top of another, and form convenient receptacles for the various commodities, which are generally laid, just as they are, in these shelves; any perishable articles they keep in wooden boxes from Damascus.

The shops themselves are small rooms, a few feet square, without a window, and opening on to the street. In the less-important places, any odd corner, the space under an archway leading on to the roof, or any hole that can be made sufficiently secure against thieves, will serve the purpose. The shopkeeper often lives in his shop, and I have on more than one occasion been glad to avail myself of such a shelter. Much of the buying and selling is done by barter, money being a very scarce commodity. As one sits chatting with the shopkeeper, a young man comes in for some tobacco,

and tenders a couple of eggs in payment; these are accepted, and he receives a little square paper packet from a rough straw basket containing a pile of such packets. Presently a youth appears with a dirty tin can to be filled with petroleum; he has no money with him, but says his father has sent him and will pay when he next has any, and, as he is the son of the sheikh of the village, the owner of the shop trusts him. In a few minutes a young woman appears with a small basket of barley which she wishes to exchange for some native sweets; the shopkeeper takes the barley, which he empties into a box half full of that grain, and gives her in return a handful of indigestible-looking red and white sugar-plums, about the size of peas. A boy comes next with a single egg, which he tenders in payment for some sugar: the proper price of the amount he wants is two eggs, but he has only one just now, and will bring the other as soon as he can get it; the man agrees, and gives him an irregular lump of sugar from a sackful in one corner, and the lad departs well pleased.

The next customer is a middle-aged man, who wants a skein of red cotton for his wife. A bundle of skeins wrapped up in paper is produced from a hole in the wall, and the man, who is very suspicious, and evidently thinks the shopkeeper is trying to cheat him, at length selects one, and, after haggling over the price, produces a small coin in payment. The shopkeeper objects to it as being too much worn; 'By the life of the Prophet,

I have nothing else,' returns the customer, and the other, rather than lose his custom, accepts it. It is, however, a trifle more than the price of the skein, and, after hunting all over his shop, the salesman cannot quite scrape together the full amount of change, so after a lot of talking and arguing the man goes off with his purchase, and the sum of half a farthing to his credit on the other's 'books'—*i.e.*, his head! Just as he gets outside the door, the boy who bought the sugar returns to discharge his debt, one of his mother's hens having in the meanwhile very obligingly laid an egg. And so it goes on all day long.

Even in the large market villages much of the payments to the shopkeepers is in kind. In exchange for their wares they take fowls, eggs, wheat, and other farm produce, which they in turn sell in the towns for cash. Another form of this trading by barter is met with in the summer. A man has his land planted with vines, and so can grow but little wheat, but during the grape season he will now and then take a load of fruit to a village where there are no vines, and exchange it for corn, giving three pounds of grapes for a pound of wheat. Prickly-pears, tomatoes, water-melons, etc., are often brought for sale in this way.

East of the Jordan, about Kerak, where there is even less coin in circulation than in other districts, the people, when selling their produce, state its value in corn, even though the payment may be actually made in coin. The shops in Kerak and

some other places are much more roomy than those in Western Palestine, as the accompanying illustration will show.

Cattle markets are held at certain towns and villages, as Jerusalem, Lydd, etc., once a week, or at longer intervals. To these the peasants bring their horses, camels, cattle, mules, and donkeys for sale. That at Jerusalem is held on Friday.

There are a few itinerant pedlars who go about the country selling needles and thread, combs, cheap round looking-glasses, and other small articles, chiefly such as are required by women. *They* also do most of their trade by barter, receiving eggs, grain, etc., in return for their wares, and disposing of these in the towns for a fresh stock of goods. A few Jews wander about selling silk for embroidering the women's dresses; while itinerant cobblers, tinsmiths, and jewellers are also to be met with.

When the Mohammedan conquest of Palestine took place, Arab adventurers and warriors from various tribes of the Hejaz, and other parts of Arabia, settled in the country and became powerful. Among these were men from two clans, or tribes, known as Kês and Yemen. They gradually acquired position and authority, and had many villages in the Jebel el Kuds under their control. These two tribes had been at enmity in their own land, and carried the memory of this enmity into Palestine. After a while the old feud broke out again, and there were frequent quarrels, often

ending in bloodshed, between the various villages attached to the two factions. Sometimes the one got the upper hand, and sometimes the other. The Christians were obliged to side with one or the other. In one village where there were several large families, one half was Kês, and the other Yemen. Not that they were keen partisans, but merely to preserve their village from destruction, as, whichever side was for the moment supreme, the place would be unmolested for the sake of the moiety of the population which was in league with that particular side. The inhabitants of the villages which belong to the two factions were, and are still to a great extent, distinguished by the colour of their turbans, those of the Kês adherents being red, and the Yemen white. The chiefs of the respective factions would always acknowledge the claims of their Christian partisans, and would come to their help when in danger from the opposite party. The Turkish Government has during the last twenty-five years made its authority more felt, and in consequence the fights between these two factions have become, to a large extent, a thing of the past, though not altogether so. I can recall one at least within the last few years, although no lives were lost in the skirmishes.

In some of the villages of the Beni Zeid, as Abûd, Abu Meshal, Slûkh, Deir ul Ghassaneh, Beit Rima, Koba, and Kefr Ain, are families of a widely-spread clan known as the Baraghafeh. They take their name from Abu Bekr, the first

Khalîfa, or successor of Mohammed, from whom they claim to be descended. They consider themselves much above the ordinary Fellahîn, and their women are secluded, more as those of the townspeople. After marriage they are, in many cases, not allowed to go out of the house into the street until middle-aged, and under any circumstances not for several years. When at length they do begin to go outside the house, they cover their heads and faces with a sort of cloak. In old age they go about unveiled, and dressed much as other peasant women.

The Beni Zeid mentioned above were, with the Beni Hârith and others whose names will be seen marked on some maps of Palestine, Arab settlers who acquired authority in bygone centuries over certain districts, their names being given to those districts to the present time.

There is a very strong feeling about the duties of clanship among the Fellahîn. This has, no doubt, been fostered and developed by the lawlessness and unsettled state of the land in days now past; still, if a man can prove even the most distant relationship to another, the claim is recognised, and help and assistance will, as far as possible, be given him in any difficulty.

The same feeling runs through most things, and binds together people of the same creed, family, and village, for mutual help and protection. On the other hand, if a quarrel takes place between two persons, it is often considered to extend to all the members of his house or clan, and sometimes

even more widely still. This is illustrated by their proverbs, such, *e.g.*, as, 'He who is not of your family your enemy does not envy him,' and, again, 'Your neighbour's enemy does not love you.' This clannishness has, however, been fatal to any national life; its practical effect has been to split up the people into little parties, distrustful of all outside their own particular set, and so has prevented any combination of the people against oppression or to secure better government. Though no part of the policy of the foreign Power which now rules Palestine, it is, nevertheless, another instance of the truth of the old Roman maxim, 'Divide et impera.' In all probability its source, apart from an innate tendency in this direction, is to be found in the influx of Arab settlers in the period succeeding the Mohammedan conquest of Syria, who, as mentioned when speaking of the Kês and Yemen factions, brought their ancient feuds with them, and perpetuated them in their new home, thus being a further fulfilment concerning Ishmael and his descendants, that his hand should be against every man, and every man's hand against him (Gen. xvi. 12). This lack of unity is acknowledged by the best of the people, but so far they have found no remedy for it.

The head of the village is called a *Sheikh* (literally, 'an old man'). As a rule there is only one Sheikh, but occasionally there is more than one. Till recent times there was a great deal of real authority attaching to the office, extending even, in rare cases, to the power of life and death. The policy

of the Ottoman Government of late years has been to abolish such offices, as far as any effective authority is concerned, so that except in very out-of-the-way places, where the central power is still comparatively ineffective, the position of a Sheikh is very largely a sinecure, and carries with it but little of the old prestige; nevertheless, an able man, especially if he be rich and of an influential family, has still a good deal of indirect power. Many cases of petty crimes are never taken to the Government, but settled locally; and I have even known the same course pursued in a murder case. In serious matters several of the more prominent Sheikhs of the neighbourhood will be called in to advise or adjudicate, and their decision will be binding. When a Sheikh dies, the Sheikhs of the adjacent villages meet together to choose his successor, the office not being hereditary. As a matter of fact, however, unless there were anything specially to disqualify him, the eldest son of the late Sheikh would succeed his father.

Besides the Sheikh, every village has a kind of council of men chosen by the villagers. They are the official representatives of the village in all matters which have to go before the Government. Thus, when the tithes have been assessed, a document is issued from the proper department in the head town of the district where the village is situated, stating the amount demanded from the people for that year; but before it can be collected, the *Ikhtîyarîyah*, as these representatives are called, must put their seals to this document,

showing that they consider it a just assessment, and pledging themselves to the payment of it. Should they consider it unjust, they are bound to refuse to seal it, and sometimes, where this is the case, they do refuse; but too often they either lack the courage to do so or accept a bribe from those to whose interest it is to put the taxes at a high figure.

There is also an official known as a *Mukhtar*, who has to inform the Government of all births, deaths, and marriages, in his community; to collect taxes from the people; get passports for any who may wish to travel; and, where anyone is arrested, to try to get him off or find bail for him. Most of the various religious communities have each a Mukhtar of their own, or, if they be numerous, two or more, as every twenty-four families can, if they so desire, claim to have a Mukhtar to themselves.

Compulsory military service obtains throughout the Turkish Empire. Every year a conscription takes place, when all the able-bodied Mohammedan males have to draw lots for this purpose. Christians are not allowed to bear arms, this being one of the marks of inferiority imposed on them at the time of the Arab conquest of Palestine. Instead of military service they have to pay a special tax, which is levied on all males. The conscription is hated by the people, who do all they can to evade it. I have even known of a man cutting off one of his fingers in order to disqualify himself for bearing arms, while a young Moslem I know well,

who had his leg amputated, congratulated himself that now he could not be taken as a soldier. This compulsory service is a heavy burden to the people. In the palmy days of Ottoman rule, when the land was richer and the people more prosperous, it pressed but lightly on them; but now it is very different. The numbers of able-bodied men taken out of the country, though not, perhaps, absolutely large, are relatively so. Indeed, in some cases, as a man once said to me, 'only old men and boys are left to till the ground.' This is, of course, not always the case, but only when some war-scare has led to the calling out of the reserves. Still, this compulsory military service is a constant drain on the Moslem population, as many of those thus taken from their homes never return, and it is a potent factor in the steady diminution of the Mohammedans in Palestine and Syria.

One characteristic feature of the village life is the *Sahrah*, or 'watching.' If a guest from the city, or a European stranger, or anyone of consequence, is spending the night in the village, the people of the place, after the evening meal, will drop in by ones and twos to the room where he is staying, whether it be with the sheikh in the public guest-house or with any one of the villagers. The outer door of the house is always open, and the people stroll in as they please, unrebuked. A dark form fills the doorway, the man pauses for a moment after he has crossed the threshold to slip off his shoes, and then advancing into the room, with a general salute of 'May your evening be

prosperous' or 'God be with you' if they are Christians, and 'Peace be upon you' if Moslems, he comes up to the principal guest and salutes him, taking his hand between his two palms and uttering an appropriate greeting. He then salutes the other guests, if any; which done, he takes his seat among those already present, squatting down in the place due to his social position in the little community. Others come in in quick succession, and the room soon fills. The visitor is asked for the latest items of news from the city. A report has been spread that the *Redîf* (the reserves) are to be called out, and, if Moslems, the probabilities or the reverse of the news being true are eagerly discussed, the military service being most unpopular.

The news of the village is retailed, the weather, the prospects of the harvest, vintage, or olive crop, discussed, or news of the outside world, as far as it has reached them, is told or commented on. And most extraordinary news one hears sometimes! When King Edward succeeded to the throne, the wildest stories were current among the Fellahîn as to the part the Sultan had played in securing his succession; for they have the most exaggerated ideas of the power of the Sublime Porte in the councils of Europe. One version I heard was, that the English did not wish the Prince of Wales to succeed Queen Victoria, but that the Sultan put his foot down and insisted on his being accepted as King, and that the British nation *of course* gave in at once. Another version was, that on Queen

Victoria's death the crowned heads of Europe met to discuss who should succeed her (just as in the case of the death of one of their village sheikhs), and, on a difference of opinion arising among them, it was decided to refer the matter to the Sultan and to abide by his decision, and that he decided for King Edward, who was therefore chosen by the other Sovereigns as the King of Great Britain! These gatherings are full of interest to a stranger, as he learns much then of the habits and customs of the people, while to the missionary they are invaluable opportunities for delivering his message.

The Fellahîn have a great love for their native place, and think it is a real hardship to have to settle elsewhere.

As in other parts of the world, there is a considerable difference in the dialects spoken in various parts of the country, this difference consisting partly in pronunciation, and partly in the use of different words, this latter being increased by the extreme copiousness of the Arabic language, and by the small amount of communication, till lately, between the different districts. The towns-people often laugh at the Fellahîn for their pronunciation, and though there are vulgarisms in this, yet they, too, can turn the tables on the former, and in the matter of grammar they are, at times, the more correct of the two. Thus, the Fellahîn very frequently pronounce the *kaf* (or soft *k*), as a *ch*—*chul-ed-dechachîn* (all the shops), instead of *kul-ed-dekakîn;* while, on the other hand, the towns-people will have the very disagreeable habit

of dropping the *kâf* (or hard *k*)—thus, *'anînch* (a bottle), instead of *kanineh*; *Ya-ûb* (Jacob), instead of *Yakûb*. Occasionally a classical word, the meaning of which has been forgotten, is used as a proper name. Thus, both Tabor and the Mount of Olives are known locally as Jebel et Tûr (the Hill, or Mountain, of Tûr), *Tûr* being an archaic word for hill (the same as 'Taurus,' and our word 'tor,' used in Cumberland, Westmorland, Derbyshire, and Devonshire, for a hill*). Those Fellahîn who come much in contact with the Bedouin usually speak a much purer and more classical dialect than the others, and also share with them certain peculiarities of pronunciation. Thus, they almost invariably pronounce the *kâf* (*k*) as a hard *g*—*gamr*, instead of *kamr* (the moon)—and the *kaf* as *ch*, thus losing both the *k* sounds of the Arabic alphabet. This is especially true of the Fellahîn east of the Jordan.

There are many gipsies in Palestine, who wander about from village to village, spending their whole lives in miserable tents. They are divided into different tribes or clans, each of which keeps to its own tract of country. They are nominally Moslem, but what their real religion is no one seems to know. Of late years the Turkish Government has exacted military service from them, as

* There is a curious instance of precisely the same use of a word of forgotten meaning as a proper name in the North of England, a hill in the lake district being known as Tor-pen-how Hill, each of these four words having precisely the same meaning, but in as many different languages or dialects.

from the Fellahîn. The women are inveterate beggars, and a proverb runs, 'Put a gipsy woman in a hundred palaces, and she will still beg.' They have a language of their own, which the Fellahîn contemptuously call *Asfûreh*, or 'sparrows' talk.' They are on good terms with the peasants, and are the blacksmiths of the countryside, doing all the little odd jobs which a village smith would do in England, but with the most primitive of tools. I am inclined to think that this was the case in Jewish times also, and may partly account for the fact that iron and smiths are so rarely mentioned in the Old Testament in connection with the Israelites. It also, I think, throws light on a rather curious passage. In 1 Sam. xiii. 19 we read: 'Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears.' It is not said that the Philistines killed all the smiths in Israel, and, indeed, this would have been impossible, unless the nation had been brought much lower than we know to have been the case; yet the Israelites seem to have been ignorant of the art of making these weapons, and to have been deprived by the action of the Philistines, of those to whom they would otherwise have gone for swords or spears.

Had these roving smiths been found then, as now, the matter would have been simple enough, as they would have been easily discovered, and by merely removing them, with their 'houses of hair' and other impedimenta, into the Philistines' country,

the Israelites would have been effectually deprived of the means of obtaining arms.

At times one meets peasants going about with a dancing bear, which they make perform for hire. The bear is the Syrian species from the Lebanon, smaller in size and lighter in colour than the European one. Sometimes besides a bear they have a goat which does climbing tricks.

There are certain men who may be called 'improvisers,' who go about the country and sing to the accompaniment of a native violin or some other instrument. Sometimes two of them will have a contest of skill, improvising against each other. There is a famous instance of two such, one a Maronite and the other a Greek, which I append.

Says the Maronite:

'I am not like other men, nor of an odious creed, nor like the Greek priest, for whom there is no place in heaven.'

The Greek replies:

'I am not like other men, nor of a fettered creed, nor like Mar Marûn, binding a clout on his eye;'

the allusion being to the Maronite being bound to Rome, and to Marûn their patron saint, who is said to have lost an eye by a blow from the awl of a cobbler whom he had attacked in controversy.

CHAPTER IV

DOMESTIC LIFE

THE infant of a peasant family, when it arrives on the scene, is, if a boy, heartily welcomed. Even if a girl the fact is not regretted to the extent it would be in the case of towns-people, as, if spared to grow up, a good sum will be received for her at her marriage. As soon as born, the child is rubbed all over with salt and oil, and wrapped in old garments; on the third day it is again rubbed with salt and oil, or very frequently with a mixture of oil and red earth instead. On the seventh day it has a bath, and from that day till the fortieth it is washed about once a week. After the fortieth day, infants are not washed again till they can talk, the only exception being that the face is sometimes cleaned with a little milk, but never with water. Such is the general practice, but it varies a good deal in different parts of the country.

The swaddling-clothes (St. Luke ii. 7) consist of several pieces: a tiny shirt, a cap, a little cotton coat, a long strip of calico which is bound round and round the child to insure his body, arms, and legs being perfectly straight and rigid, and over all

a large square of print or other material in which the body is 'wrapped' tightly, and which is secured by a tape. These clothes are worn till the child is two or three months old, the length of time being determined by his size and strength, a small delicate child being bound up far longer than a large healthy one.

The peasant women are very strong physically, and usually work hard up to the time of their confinement, and are about again very soon after it, without in any way suffering from doing so. I remember a case of a Moslem woman who supplied us with milk, walking each day into the city with her basket of milk-jars on her head, whose child was born as she was returning one day from her round: she wrapped the little one in her veil, and walked home with it as if nothing had happened. In another similar case, a Christian woman, who had gone to cut firewood several miles from the village, returned with a heavy faggot of sticks on her head and her new-born infant wrapped up in her sleeve. Village midwives receive but a trifling remuneration, usually in the form of wheat or some other household necessary, and only in a few of the more prosperous villages are they ever paid in money.

Should the father be absent from home at the time of the child's birth, someone will go to the town, or wherever he may be working (especially should it be a first-born and a son), to take the news. On meeting the father, he greets him with the words '*El besharah andak*' (There is good news at home). The latter, who at once guesses what

the good news is, replies, 'May God announce good news to you: I give you so-and-so,' naming as valuable a present as his circumstances will permit.

Among the Christian peasantry the next important matter is the naming of a child. In the case of the first-born of an eldest son, custom prescribes the name by which he must be called—viz., that of his paternal grandfather. Thus, if a man of the name of Mûsa (Moses) has a son of the name of Ibrahîm (Abraham), the latter will call his eldest son Mûsa, after his father. So much is this the case that sometimes a mere boy is called the 'father of So-and-so,' the name being that of the son which it is hoped he will one day have, and which he will, in accordance with this custom, call by his father's name;* for when a child is born to a young couple, they are known thenceforth, not by their own names, but as the 'father of So-and-so' and the 'mother of So-and-so.' Thus, if Rashîd has a son Towfîk, he will no longer be known as Rashîd, nor will his wife, Jamîleh, be known by that name; but he will be called *Abu Towfîk* (Father of Towfîk), and she will be called *Imm Towfîk* (Mother of Towfîk). This custom, however, rather adds to the difficulty of distinguishing people in ordinary conversation, as there are, strictly

* This expression has sometimes been differently explained as an idiom peculiar to the Fellahîn, viz., *Abu* for *Abuhu*—*i.e.*, 'father' instead of 'his father.' Careful inquiry has, however, convinced me that this is incorrect, the explanation in the text being the true one.

speaking, no surnames in use in Palestine. For instance, in the two examples given above, Ibrahîm will be in more precise language, as, *e.g.*, in the address of a letter, Ibrahîm Mûsa—*i.e.*, son of Mûsa; and Towfîk will be Towfîk Rashîd—*i.e.*, son of Rashîd; whereas their eldest sons will be Mûsa Ibrahîm, and Rashîd Towfîk respectively.

On the other hand, besides these appellations, there is the name of the man's 'house' or 'clan' which can be used as a means of further identifying or distinguishing him. In almost every village there are two or more of these 'clans' or 'houses,' bearing sometimes (as the Scotch clans) a common name. This name may be derived from that of a distinguished ancestor, or a place from which they came originally, or perhaps from some notable circumstance connected with their history. Thus, a man can be further described as 'So-and-so, son of So-and-so of such a house.' This is a common Oriental expression, and one we find occurring in the Old Testament, as, for example, Num. xvii. 8, 1 Sam. xxv. 3, 2 Chron. xxii. 9; and on the Assyrian monuments Beit Khumri, House of Omri, is the usual term for the Kings of Israel.

Of the names in ordinary use a few are peculiar to Moslems and Christians respectively. Of the former may be mentioned such as Mohammed and Mustapha among men's names, and Khadîjeh, Zênab and 'Aysheh among women's; while of the latter Bulus and Butrus will serve as instances of men's, and Marîa and Lydia of women's names. Many of the Mohammedan names are compounds

of one or other of the ninety-nine names of God, as Abul-ul-Kâdir (Slave of the Almighty), Abd-ur-Rahmân (Slave of the Compassionate), and so on. The great majority of names are common to Mohammedans and Christians. Many are given because of their meaning, such as Towfîk, fortunate; Jamîl, handsome; Anîs, sociable; Zarîfeh, beautiful; Nabîhah, intelligent; and so on. The signification of some of the compound names is very beautiful: thus, Lutfallah and Farajallah, both of which are men's names, mean 'the gentleness of God' and 'the rest of God' respectively; and Rahmetallah, a girl's name, 'the mercy of God.'

Among the Moslems there is no special ceremony connected with the naming of a child. If the father has no predilection for any particular name, he goes to the Khatîb to consult him about it. These men have books which give lists of special names for each day of the week, and the father selects one of those given for the day on which the child was born.

The Christians, of course, have their children baptized, and the rite is usually administered within forty days after birth. In the Greek Church the children always have sponsors, and the difficulty of finding persons willing to take that office for a child sometimes delays baptism. It is usual for people to offer to be sponsors, as, owing to the fact that it is customary for them to make presents to their godchildren, parents are very reluctant to ask people to stand. Where persons have been godparents to a first-born child, it

is usual for them to act the same part by all the subsequent members of the family. Sponsorship is much thought of (though not from a religious point of view), and is held to constitute a kind of relationship—so much so that a man's own children may not intermarry with his godchildren. Baptism in the Eastern Churches is always by immersion, and is immediately followed by the Chrism, or anointing with holy oil, which the Greek Church holds to be equivalent to the rite of Confirmation in the Churches of Western Christendom.*

The desire for children, and especially sons, is intensely strong in the East. For a wife to be childless is, among the Moslems, ample reason for divorcing her. This longing is closely connected with the great aim of all Easterns—viz., 'the building up of a house' (*cf.* 2 Sam. vii. 27 and 1 Kings xi. 38). The Arabic words for 'son' and 'daughter' are (as in Hebrew) from the same root as the ordinary word for 'to build,' children being looked upon as stones, as it were, in a building. This feeling has doubtless its origin in the yearning for immortality which is found in every human being, and of which what is ordinarily called ambition is one of the best-known manifestations. This idea finds expression in many salutations and phrases used in everyday life. 'May God leave you your children' prays the beggar, who hopes that you will reward his prayer by a gift; 'May

* Circumcision is universally practised among Mohammedans. There is no rite connected with it, and no limit of time within which it must take place.

God build your house' is one of the best blessings which a grateful recipient of alms can wish the donor; 'The safety of your children' is the ordinary response to the appropriate salutation at a funeral or on hearing of a death. The prophet's sentence upon Agag (1 Sam. xv. 33), 'As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women,' would to an Oriental be the most righteous, and at the same time the most terrible retribution, which could follow his crimes.

The people have but little idea of their children's ages, or of their own, for that matter. Ask an old man in one of the villages what his age is: 'Well, I was married the year Ibrahîm Pasha took Palestine,' or, 'My second son was born the year the cholera came,' will be his answer. Often, when inquiring how old a child in one of our schools might be, I have been met with the answer, 'How can I tell? You must know, for you baptized him.' It is true that the Greek Church keeps a kind of record of baptisms, and that of late years the Turkish Government has required all births to be registered; yet a good deal of laxity prevails about these matters, more especially in the remoter parts of the country. If parents know, even approximately, their children's ages, it arises from the fact of their having been born in a year when some event of special interest took place, such as an outbreak of cholera, an invasion of locusts, or the like. On one occasion I was staying the night with a well-to-do peasant in the land of Moab, and in the course of the evening a neighbour came in to

see me. At a break in the conversation, my host remarked that his eldest son, a well-grown lad who was present, had been ploughing all day. 'Ploughing!' exclaimed the neighbour: 'you shouldn't let him do such hard work, he's too young for it.' 'He's not too young: he's sixteen.' 'Sixteen! Nonsense! Why, what year was he born?' 'I don't know what year it was, but it was the time the red donkey died, and that, I'm sure, was sixteen years ago!'

Women often nurse their children for a very long time, especially in the case of a first boy or where the mother has been long married before having a child. Occasionally under such circumstances a boy will be nursed for three or four years. This custom explains how it was that the child Samuel could be left at Shiloh shortly after his mother had weaned him (1 Sam. i. 24). When a child is weaned, they sometimes cook wheat, lentils, beans, and such-like, put sweetmeats on it, and send dishes of it to friends to commemorate the event. In like manner the Christians at the baptism of a boy commonly make a feast, inviting the friends and neighbours and officiating priest.*

Like children all the world over, those of Palestine, as soon as they can run about, imitate the doings of their elders: make mud houses, toy ovens, and copy their mothers at work in the house. The boys have certain games which they play with zest, though not with the energy and precision of English

* The Moslems occasionally do the same at the circumcision of a child.

boys. One of these games somewhat resembles our hockey, being played with a ball made of rags, about the size of a tennis-ball, and curved sticks. It is called *Kûr*, and is played chiefly in the winter. A level piece of ground is selected, and a hole called 'the mother' is made in the centre. One boy guards this hole, the others endeavouring to knock the ball into it, and he trying to prevent this. It is a most exciting game judged by the shouts of the players. Another and milder amusement is played by three or four boys at a time. Each boy has several little darts or arrows which are thick, heavy, sharp-pointed, and feathered with pieces of paper. A player throws one of these darts so as to make it stick upright in the ground; the next one tries to throw his arrow across the first in such a way as to knock it over, and at the same time take an upright position like that of the first one. If he is successful in this, he takes the other player's arrow. This game is confined to the winter and spring, as it can only be played while the ground is soft.

A third game called *Mankalch* is played by men as well as boys, and has a tremendous fascination for the people. It is played on a board with four rows of holes, each row having eight holes. Small stones are used, each player having a certain number, which are distributed according to rule in the holes, and the game consists in getting all the opponents' pieces. It appears to be a very complicated game, and I have never had time to master

the rules. It is played with great zest, and some men waste much time over it.*

In addition to their games, the boys make slings with which they hurl stones to a considerable distance. Some are very clever at this pastime, and a strong lad can send one with tremendous force, and a whiz almost like that of a rifle bullet; so that, after seeing them engaged in this amusement, one can well understand how formidable a weapon a sling would be in the hands of a powerful man of skilful aim, especially before the invention of firearms, when fighting was at close quarters, if not actually hand-to-hand. The slings are made of coarse woollen string, with a sort of bag in the centre to hold the stone.

The boys also make little bird-traps of one or two twigs and a piece of string. They are baited with a berry, or some other food, and just laid on the ground in the haunts of the birds. With the same object they make limed twigs from mulberry and other trees by heating the young shoots over a fire.

Gambling is strictly forbidden to Moslems, and is looked upon by all classes and creeds as very wrong, and any game which is in any way associated with that vice is entirely avoided by respectable people.

Education is making great strides among the

* This game is spread widely throughout the East. At Zanzibar, and along the eastern coast of Africa, where it is known by the name of *Bao*, it is much played; while in Uganda, where it has probably been introduced by the Arab traders, and is called *Mweso*, I have seen the natives spend hours over it at one sitting.

CHRISTIAN VILLAGE SCHOOL.

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peasantry. The late Bishop Gobat, on his appointment to the English bishopric in Jerusalem in 1849, found that there were practically no schools at all for the Arabic-speaking population, and the means which he then took to supply the deficiency have been the origin of all the educational work now being carried on, as they aroused, first the Oriental Churches, and then the Turkish Government, to provide schools for the different sections of the community. Now, throughout the villages and hamlets, schools have been opened in all but the very small places, and teachers appointed, in the case of the Christians by the various Churches to which they belong, and in the case of the Moslems by the Ottoman Government. In the latter a fairly strict watch is now kept on the attendance of the boys, the parents being fined if the children are not regular. For the girls, however, there is little or no provision apart from the mission schools. Among the Mohammedans the teacher is frequently also the Khatîb, a religious instructor, who is either in receipt of a fixed salary from the Government, or, by the orders of the latter, receives a certain amount (generally in grain) from each family. This last arrangement, however, as far as I know, only obtains in the smaller hamlets. He also sometimes combines other occupations with that of pedagogue; thus, in one village I know he is also village carpenter, making and mending ploughs, and other agricultural implements, in the courtyard of the little village mosque, while teaching his youthful scholars their letters or the Korân.

The early age at which the children begin to work sadly interferes with their acquiring more than an elementary knowledge of the three R's. The boys generally begin when very small by helping in specially busy times, such as harvest, when they drive the grain-laden animals from the field to the threshing-floor; or in the olive-gathering, when they pick up the fallen berries under the trees. When somewhat older they will be trusted to take the kids and lambs out to graze near the village, or they may go with their fathers to the city, driving donkeys laden with corn, wood, etc., to sell there. Gradually harder work is given them till that of a full-grown man is reached.

The girls begin, if anything, earlier than the boys, often helping at harvest and olive-gathering as they do, besides which they very soon assist their mothers in the house-work, fetching water and wood, baking, cooking, cleaning the corn, and doing other things that fall to the lot of the women. It is found by experience that unless the girls begin early to accustom themselves to carry the heavy weights, such as wood, water, etc., which are always borne on the head, and the carrying of which forms part of a woman's ordinary work, they never can acquire the necessary strength and skill to do so. This is one of the many practical problems to be solved by those who wish to raise the peasant women of Palestine, and to give them such an education as will fit them to be the helpmeets of the rising generation of more educated men.

The Fellahîn have wonderful power of memory,

due largely, no doubt, to the fact that for centuries they have had solely to rely on their memories, as, being unable to read or write, they have had no extraneous aids. The children have a remarkable faculty for learning things by heart, even without understanding them. They are very quick in acquiring a knowledge of foreign languages, especially where these are spoken at all in the place where they live.* This, I think, throws light on the much-debated question of what language our Blessed Lord spoke. In a place like Nazareth, so near to, if not actually on, one of the great highroads of Western Asia, He would have frequent opportunities of hearing at least one foreign language (Greek) spoken. In the home of the humble carpenter, Aramaic, or whatever the Semitic language then spoken in Palestine be called, would be that ordinarily used, but in the workshop and the market-place Greek would be as often heard as the other. My own view is that He was as much at home in the one as in the other (the same being true, probably, of all the Galilean Apostles), but that, in hours of intensest feeling, the words which—we may say it with all reverence—would naturally come to His lips were

* The case of a Syrian servant we once had illustrates, though from another nation, this facility of acquiring languages. She was a peasant from a village in Mesopotamia, a woman of no intellectual power whatever, and of very little education; yet she could speak five Oriental languages, appearing equally at home in every one, and could read two of them.

those of the tongue which in childhood were learnt from the lips of the Virgin Mother.

From some points of view the family life (not *home* life as we understand it, of which there is very little) is much more developed than with us. Thus, if a man has several grown-up sons, all will often live together. They all till the land together, and take their share of looking after the goats and sheep. Their interests are all one, and during the father's lifetime no son would have anything of his own, nor would he claim any share of the property or money. Even when one or more of the sons marry, they do not go away; the father builds a room for the newly-married couple by the side of or on the roof of his own, another being added for each son as he marries—the family thus living and working as one. Sometimes a father, who is getting old and finds himself unable to do his part in tilling the ground, will occasionally himself divide his land among his sons, who for the remainder of his life share in supporting him in an honourable independence. Of course, after a time some have to hive off if the family grows numerous, and, owing to the increasing poverty of the people, they drift to the towns to find work, while many have emigrated, more particularly to Egypt and North and South America. The people of Bethlehem, who are particularly enterprising, are remarkable for this spirit of emigration, and there are little colonies of them to be found, not only in America, but also in Hayti, Australia, East Africa, and other lands.

The degraded position of woman in Moslem lands is too well known to need any detailed statement, and in Palestine it is neither better nor worse than in most places where Islâm holds sway. The condition of the Moslem Felâhah, or peasant woman, is, however, as a rule decidedly less irksome than that of her town sister. With the exception of those living in the extreme South, on the borders of the Egyptian frontier, and of the Barâghafeh (previously mentioned), the peasant women are always unveiled. They are much more the equals of their husbands than is the case with the towns-people. The latter often know nothing whatever about their husband's concerns, being shut up in the *Harîm*, or women's quarters, all day, or only going out to see other women similarly circumstanced. They are the toys, drudges, slaves, chattels, of their husbands, never his companions or equals. It is otherwise with the country-woman; the very conditions of her life compel her to be more to her husband than the towns-woman. She knows all about his work, suffers in his losses, rejoices in his gains; she helps to till the soil, gather in the harvest, and sell the produce of the land in the towns; occasionally, even, she rules the whole family. Still, when all is said and done, the position of woman among Mohammedans is a fearfully low one; she is looked upon as hardly a human being, soundly thrashed whenever she displeases her lord and master, and is liable to be divorced any moment, or superseded by a younger and better-looking wife, at his mere caprice.

There is a curious expression—'Far be it from you'—used by the Arabs when speaking of anything not very nice. Thus, a man was once describing to me one of the old Roman bridges over the Jordan, and enlarging on the traffic which crossed it, 'thousands of camels, tens of thousands of sheep, and, far be it from you, quantities of pigs.' Sometimes in a Moslem village a man has come to me saying, 'Will you give me some medicine for a sick person?' 'Do you want it for yourself?' 'No; for someone else.' 'For a child?' 'No; far be it from you, for my wife!'

The real cause of the degradation of woman is the permission given by the Mohammedan law to polygamy, and as long as the practice has the sanction of religion, so long must woman be kept down. On the other hand, one great reason of the comparatively favourable condition of the peasant women is that polygamy is much less common in the villages than in the towns. This is chiefly due to the poverty of the people, as but few can afford to pay the dowry of more than one wife; indeed, an increasing number of young men are from this cause unable to marry at all. Even the Moslems are alive to the fact that polygamy is a fruitful source of trouble and sorrow in families. Says one of their proverbs, 'Two logs on the hearth and two wives in a house'—that is, keep up the fire which would go out were there only one; while a second runs, 'One wife in a house builds it up, a second pulls it down, and a third is all that is vile.'

Though what has been said above refers to the

Moslem women, and though, of course, the condition of Christians is in many ways much better, yet the whole attitude of the men towards women is that of a superior to a greatly inferior race, and it is impossible but that the degradation of the vast majority of the women of a country, especially where they are of the dominant religion, must affect injuriously the position of woman generally throughout the country.

It is only right to add that, while Mohammedan law gives the utmost facility to divorce, there are various circumstances which tend to check it, such as the fear of offending the wife's relations, especially if she belong to an influential family.* Occasionally, too, there is real affection between husband and wife. I knew of a case where a Moslem peasant became a leper, and his wife's friends repeatedly urged her to leave him; but she persistently refused, saying that he had always been a good husband to her, and that she would not desert him in his trouble. She remained with him, and carefully tended him, till his death. This was all the more remarkable as not only the Mohammedans, but also the Greeks, consider that when a married person becomes a leper the marriage bond is *ipso facto* dissolved, and the latter

* Among the very few really aristocratic Moslem families of Jerusalem there exists a kind of code of honour which forbids them to have more than one wife or to divorce her, and I have reason to believe that this is strictly observed even where the woman is childless. Of course this does not affect the question of female slaves.

allows the other partner to marry again, even while the leprous wife or husband is still living.

Divorce is allowed by the Greek Church, but, as far as I know, by none of the other Oriental communions found in Palestine. There are various restrictions in the Greek canon law on the subject, which are intended to safeguard it, but as a matter of fact there is no great difficulty in anyone obtaining a divorce, and I have known several cases of people being remarried even without that formality.

CHAPTER V

DOMESTIC LIFE (*continued*).

When the son or daughter of a family approaches a marriageable age, the parents begin to set about the all-important business of finding a suitable bride or bridegroom. The matter is almost invariably arranged by the parents, the young people having no voice in the matter; indeed, it would not be considered proper for a young woman to have any say in the matter, or to express a preference for one suitor over another. The only exception to this rule would be in the case of a man who, from poverty, had been unable to marry till he reached middle life, or who had no male relations to arrange the matter for him.

Where the father is dead, the eldest brother, or, failing a brother, the nearest male relation, has the disposal of a girl's hand. In the Greek Church the prohibited degrees (within which relations may not marry) are much wider than in the Churches of Western Christendom, extending to cousins several times removed, and even to one or two cases where there is no blood relationship at all. But outside these prohibited

degrees relations or persons of the same house or clan are held to have a first claim on a girl's hand, and it would sometimes lead to serious quarrels, and even to possible bloodshed, were this claim ignored. The origin of this custom is probably the idea underlying certain enactments of the Mosaic law—viz., the retention of property in the clan or tribe (*cf.* Num. xxxvi. 1-12).

The preliminary negotiations are sometimes very lengthy. If a man wishes to get a bride for his son from another family or village, he will not unfrequently employ one or more intermediaries to arrange the matter. These intermediaries will go to the house of the girl in question at a time when some of the men of the family are sure to be at home. They will stand about the door till the latter notice them, and invite them in, according to Eastern custom, with the word *Taffadhlû* (literally, 'do me the honour'). They will then reply, 'We will not enter unless our request is granted.' 'It is granted,' reply those within; whereon the men enter. When they are seated, the question is not immediately mentioned, but when the customary coffee appears they say, 'We will not drink till we have told our errand.' 'Speak,' reply the hosts. 'We ask your daughter So-and-so as wife to So-and-so,' say the guests. Sometimes, if the match be manifestly an advantageous one for the girl, the relations say, 'We agree; take her.' More often, while agreeing, they require time to arrange preliminaries; and even if the proposal be unacceptable, it is, I believe, rarely

if ever met by a direct refusal; but in the subsequent negotiations some condition impossible of fulfilment, such as an exorbitant dowry, is required, which puts an end to the matter.

The preliminaries having been satisfactorily settled, the betrothal takes place. Among the Christians this is a formal public announcement of the intended marriage. Friends and relations attend, and the priest comes and blesses the betrothed couple, the betrothal, in fact, being a religious ceremony. It is consequently very rare for a match to be broken off when once this ceremony has taken place. It may be considered as the Eastern substitute for the publication of banns, these being unknown in the Oriental Churches, and the wedding may take place any day after the betrothal. The betrothal may, on the other hand, be an informal one in infancy, and I have known children to be plighted to each other in their cradles by their parents, and the promise thus made to be carried out when they grew up.

In most cases the girls are virtually sold by their parents, the dowry going to the father, and it is this which makes the birth of a girl so much more welcome among the Fellahîn than among the towns-people, where the dowry does not go to the parents. Considerable sums are paid for girls who are good-looking, well connected, or clever at any of the Fellahîn industries. Thus, the people of the village of El Jîb (the ancient Gibeon), near Jerusalem, have a monopoly of the manufacture of a kind of earthenware cooking-pot. The work is

largely done by the women, and a girl who is clever at this will fetch a dowry of seventy or eighty Napoleons (£50 to £60), while another, who has only ordinary abilities, can be had for half that sum. As a rule, the bridegroom has to borrow money for the dowry and wedding expenses, and many men thus saddle themselves with debts which are a burden to them for the rest of their lives. In cases where a man has little or no money, or his credit is not good enough to enable him to borrow sufficient to pay the dowry of an unmarried girl, he will marry a widow, as a much smaller sum is required in such cases, especially if she have children.

Another device is not unfrequently resorted to by poor people. Yakûb, for instance, wants to marry, but has no prospect whatever of raising even a moderate sum of money. He has, however, an unmarried sister, Latîfeh, so he looks about for a family similarly circumstanced to his own, and finds another man, Salâmeh, who is also desirous of entering the married state, but who, like Yakûb, is too poor to do so. He, too, has an unmarried sister, Zarîfeh, and so an exchange is arranged between the two families, Yakûb marrying Zarîfeh, and Salâmeh Latîfeh, no dowry being paid on either side.

On the day of the wedding, if the bride lives at a different village to the bridegroom, the villagers go in great pomp, especially if the two parties belong to influential families, to escort her to the bridegroom's house. Every man who owns or can

borrow a horse rides it and gallops wildly about. There is a great expenditure of gunpowder on such occasions, and curious old-fashioned weapons of every country of Europe, and of almost every period since the invention of gunpowder, are hunted out and fired off at frequent intervals, so that at a distance a Westerner, hearing a wedding-procession for the first time, might think that a miniature battle was in progress. The people when using modern weapons are not always careful to make sure that they have only blank cartridges. On one occasion I was riding along the road from Bethany to Jerusalem as a wedding-procession was making its way down the Valley of Jehoshaphat to the village of Siloam. The usual firing was going on, and a bullet from a rifle whistled just over my head; and not very long ago, in a Christian village near Jerusalem, a young man standing at his house door to watch such a procession was accidentally shot dead by one of the party.

Weddings very commonly take place at night (see St. Matt. xxv. 1-13), both in the case of Christians and Moslems. The wedding-ceremony is, of course, where they are Christians, according to the rites of the Church to which they belong. Before this takes place the bridegroom is frequently placed on a horse and escorted round the village by his friends. At the ceremony the bride is closely veiled, no one being allowed to see her face.

In the case of Moslem weddings, all preliminaries having been finished, three witnesses go to the house of the bride's father: the latter then asks the

girl before the witnesses, 'Whom do you make your representative in the matter of your marriage?' To which she replies, 'You, father.' This question is thus asked and answered three times. The father and witnesses then proceed to the house of the Khatîb, when the latter asks the father, 'Whom do you make your agent (or representative) in the matter of your daughter's marriage?' 'You,' answers the man. This is also asked three times. They all then go to the bridegroom's house, and the latter stands, hand in hand with the father, before the Khatîb. The Khatîb first addresses the father and asks him thrice, 'Have you, Mohammed, given Fâtimeh, the daughter of Mohammed, to Mustapha to be her lawful husband according to the belief of Abu Hanîfeh?' The father, each time the question is asked, replies, 'I have given her.' Then, turning to the bridegroom, the Khatîb says, 'Have you, Mustapha, taken Fâtimeh, the daughter of Mohammed, to be her lawful husband according to the belief of Abu Hanîfeh?' This is also asked thrice, the bridegroom each time replying, 'I have taken her.' The Khatîb then reads the Fâtihah, or opening chapter of the Korân, and the ceremony is over.

A feast generally takes place on the evening of the wedding, and the invited guests have to bring presents; a list of these and of their value is made, and when there is a wedding in the family of any of the donors, the bridegroom of this occasion has to give a present of similar value.

The women of the village gather at the house

where the wedding takes place, and dance. This is scarcely what we understand by the term, but it has a great fascination for the Fellahât, and many of them will neglect everything for it when there happens to be a wedding going on. I need hardly say that the promiscuous dancing of Europe is quite unknown in Palestine, and would be considered, to say the least, highly improper. The men and women form different groups, and the dances consist of rhythmical movements of the body by each dancer, singly or holding each others' hands; this accompanied by clapping of hands and singing, which latter consists of the constant repetition on one or two notes of a few words, often foolish, and sometimes worse. At a wedding I once witnessed in a village, the dancers, for half an hour or more, repeated without intermission the words, 'Oh, coffee-maker, put up your cups and coffee.' I have also seen a kind of sword-dance performed at a wedding. In this case a large fire was lighted at night in the centre of an open space in the village. All the people were gathered in a wide ring round the fire, and in the space between, a sister of the bride, gorgeously dressed, performed a dance, holding a drawn sword in one hand, and posturing and sideling about in stiff, ungraceful attitudes, the men accompanying her movements with hand-clapping and shouting. Occasionally, I believe, the bride herself will come out and dance, but I have never myself seen this done. I have, however, seen a sort of effigy of the bride called *Zarâfch*, consisting

of some of her clothes stuffed with straw in the form of a person, fastened to a pole, and carried by a man who makes it appear to dance in the midst of the wedding-guests.

When the bride comes to her husband's house, she has, before entering, to place a piece of leavened dough on the doorpost. This act is a wish that as the leaven placed in a mass of dough increases till the whole of the mass is leavened, so she may have a numerous family, and by her the clan may grow and be increased. With the same idea she must go early the following morning and draw water, wearing under the outer garment a white garment with the edge frayed out, the many threads typifying a numerous posterity. Another custom is that of placing on the bride's head a jar of water, which she is to carry thus into the house, the idea being, probably, that of doing her part of the household work. If she be too tall to pass under the doorway with the jar on her head, an egg is substituted for it.

A bride is often carried over the threshold that her feet may not touch it, to do so being considered unlucky.

It is said that as a Druze bride enters her husband's door he gives her a smart blow with a stick, to show that she is under his rule and authority.

In some parts of the country neither bride nor bridegroom may cross a stream for a period of seven days after the wedding, as this would be most unlucky, and would mean the cutting off of the succession, the Arabic idiom for crossing a stream being that of cutting it.

There are various superstitions connected with weddings. Thus, among Moslems the marriage ceremony is conducted very quietly, and in the presence of as few people as possible, as, if anyone should be there who is unfavourable to the match, it is thought that he has the power to hinder the happiness of the married couple by various acts. Thus, smoking during the ceremony is considered to destroy all happiness, and strewing flour or earth on the floor at the time buries it completely.

Sometimes at the last moment the parents or relations will change their minds, and give the girl to some other man than the one she had been betrothed to. Thus one of their proverbs runs, 'The bride is in her chamber, but no one knows whose she will be'; and another is, 'One was betrothed to her, but the other married her.' I knew of a case where a young couple were betrothed to each other and everything was settled: the marriage-day came, and all was in readiness, and just before the time for the ceremony to take place the bridegroom, according to a common custom, went to have a bath. When he came to the house, he found that during the short time he had been absent the father had changed his mind, and had already married the bride to another man. Such actions, however, are considered rather a disgrace, and in some cases will lead to serious quarrels, and even to bloodshed.

Many of the women are extensively tattooed in various patterns on the back of the hand, wrist, forearm, upper part of the chest, and face;

especially is this the case among the women east of the Jordan. Some of them even tattoo their lips, but this disfiguring custom is, as far as I know, confined entirely to the Moslem women. It is only those with fairer skins than the others who do this, the idea being that it shows up the clearness and whiteness of the complexion, thus enhancing their beauty. Some of the patterns are very elaborate, and must take a long time to do. The tattooing is usually done by gipsy women, who use ordinary ink to rub into the pattern, which is of permanent dark blue. Although chiefly seen in the case of women, it is not by any means confined to them.

The life of a newly-married girl, where families live together, is often a very hard one. She is usually in such cases little else than the slave of her mother-in-law, and this is a frequent cause of quarrels and unhappiness, especially, perhaps, among the Christians. There is usually but little love between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and the former often behave most tyrannically towards their sons' wives, remembering, no doubt, what they suffered in their early married life, just as the former slave makes the most cruel slave-driver. This is reflected in their proverbs; one of these, in which the mother-in-law is supposed to address her daughter-in-law, runs, 'Don't eat what is broken nor break what is whole, and eat till you are satisfied'; while another declares that 'were the mother-in-law to love her daughter-in-law, dogs would enter Paradise.'

CHAPTER VI

DOMESTIC LIFE (*continued*)

THE life of the women is not an easy one, and their work begins when they are quite young. In the early morning a woman rises to grind the corn for the day's supply of bread, and the grinding goes on at intervals throughout the day. This work is very severe, especially where there are many mouths to feed, and in the villages one hears the hum of the millstones early in the morning, long before daybreak, and far on into the night also. A strong woman once told me that it took her five hours every day to grind the corn for her family, which was not a particularly large one. This hum of the millstones is exceedingly characteristic of the villages, so much so that the Fellahîn have a special word for it. There are allusions to it both in the Old and New Testaments; thus, the sound of the grinding being low would be an indication of weakness and old age (Eccles. xii. 4); while to an Oriental no more striking figure of absolute desolation could be imagined than that 'the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee' (Rev. xviii. 22).

The hand-mills which are used for this purpose have two flat circular stones, the upper and the nether millstones. These stones are made of a hard black basalt which is brought from the volcanic district of the Lejah (Trachonitis), near the borders of the Hauran, the ancient Bashan. They are from 15 to 18 inches in diameter and very heavy. The lower stone has a small hole in the centre into which a wooden plug is firmly driven, and in this plug an iron pin is fixed, to serve as a pivot, on which the upper stone turns. This latter has an aperture of two or three inches in the middle, and across this a piece of hard wood is fixed by means of a slot in the upper surface of the stone, a hole in it admitting the above-mentioned pivot. A small space is thus left on either side of this piece of wood, through which the corn is fed. Near the edge of the upper stone is fixed the wooden handle by which the mill is turned. Sometimes the lower stone is bedded in an oblong clay vessel, one half of which is lower than the other, the millstones occupying the upper part, the lower being a receptacle for the flour. Where this is not used, a cloth is spread on the ground, and on this the mill is placed, the flour gradually collecting in a ring round it.

In grinding, the woman sits on the floor with outstretched feet, and the mill between her knees; she has a basket of corn beside her, and, as she turns the handle, puts at intervals a handful of grain into the hole of the upper stone, generally crooning a mournful song as she works. A second

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WOMEN SIFTING CORN.

WOMEN GRINDING.

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woman often helps, squatting on the ground opposite her companion, and turning the handle at the same time. This helps one to realize the startling suddenness of the call (St. Matt. xxiv. 41) when, of two thus sitting face to face over the same household task, hand touching hand, one will be gone and the other left alone.

We see the humanity of the prohibition (Deut. xxiv. 6) of taking a millstone to pledge, when we realize that the poorest family must have a mill, with whatever else of household furniture they may dispense, and that the loss of it would be practically starvation.

When sufficient flour has been ground, the operation of bread-making follows. The meal is often, but not invariably, passed through a sieve ; it is then mixed with salt and water, and kneaded into a somewhat stiff dough, in which state it is taken to the oven in a wooden bowl. Leaven (yeast is unknown) is occasionally used, and in that case the dough has to be made some hours beforehand, to allow it to rise. The leaven, which is in the form of a piece of sour or fermented dough from a previous baking, is kneaded into the fresh material, which is placed in a warm corner, and the whole is ere long leavened.

The oven in the villages consists of a dome-shaped clay vessel, three or four feet in diameter, open at its broad end, and having a hole in the centre of the dome large enough to easily admit a woman's hand and arm. It might be compared to a very large, shallow, inverted basin, with the bottom

knocked out. This is placed on a pavement of small stones, and has a lid to cover the aperture while the bread is baking. This oven is made in a small hut built for the purpose, seven or eight feet in diameter, and about five or six feet high in the middle. These ovens are a favourite meeting-place for the women of the village in cold or wet weather, and at such times they will often spend hours there.

When the fire has been lit, and the oven is warm enough, the dough is made into flat cakes about the size of a dinner-plate, and about half an inch thick; it is then laid on the paved floor of the oven or made to adhere to the clay vessel, being turned when sufficiently done on one side.

The fire is made outside the oven, and when the dough has been placed inside the lid is put on, and the ashes heaped up over it to keep in the warmth, and to allow the fuel to smoulder, a gentle sustained heat being the best for the purpose.

The fuel consists chiefly of dried cows' and goats' dung, which is carefully collected and stored for the purpose. The use of this fuel is of very ancient origin, as we see from Ezek. iv. 12, and the custom in Palestine to-day shows how the prophet would understand the command. Sometimes this fuel is used in its natural condition, but it is generally prepared by being moistened with water, mixed with straw, and made into cakes, which are dried and stored for winter use. For this purpose they employ the coarser parts of the straw from the threshing-floors, viz., the joints and lower parts of the stalks.

It is usual at the present day for several families to share an oven, each one providing the fuel for a day in turn. The reason of this is the poverty of the people, and their consequent inability to get fuel. Four or five families usually join together now, and for ten women to bake their bread in one oven (Lev. xxvi. 26) would be an indication of abject poverty. There is a regular rotation in the use of the oven, the woman whose turn it is to provide the fuel being the last to bake her bread on that particular day. The idea in this is that if she used the oven earlier, she would, her own baking finished, in order to save her fuel, let the fire get too low to do the rest of the bread properly, whereas, baking last of all, it is to her interest to keep up a good fire to the end. In cases where a man is sufficiently well off to own a number of cattle, and has, consequently, plenty of fuel, he will have an oven to himself.

In some parts of the country another kind of bread is made, closely resembling the thin oatcake of Scotland and the North of England. This is prepared somewhat differently from the other; the dough is less tenacious, and it is baked, not in an oven, but on a convex circular plate of iron, heated by a fire of sticks below. The large thin sheets of dough are laid for a few moments on this pan, and very quickly cooked.

Bread is usually made of wheat flour, but failing this the poor often use that made from the white millet, and even from barley, or they mix herbs and other things with it in times of scarcity.

Bread constitutes the chief food of the people, being eaten either alone, as in the case of the very poor, or with a few figs, olives, or some other relish, in other cases.

A great many wild plants are eaten, which the poor dig up in the fields in the spring; the mallow is the principal of these, as it was in the time of Job, 3,500 years ago (Job xxx. 4). I have, indeed, known of a whole family, in a time of great scarcity and poverty, subsisting for many weeks on mallows alone. They are cut off at the roots and boiled. They are also mixed with flour to eke out the latter, and baked into bread.

Among the more sedentary occupations of the women is that of cleaning the corn. The various processes described under threshing and winnowing leave a good deal of rubbish mixed up with the grain, such as tiny stones and hard nodules of earth from the threshing-floor, seeds of weeds and other plants, and light and undeveloped grain, all of which have to be carefully separated from the corn before it can be ground. This is partly done by a sieve, which allows the smaller impurities to pass through, but the larger foreign bodies have to be picked out by hand or removed by sifting. This is effected by shaking the sieve with a peculiar circular motion, which gradually collects the light grains, bits of straw, seeds, etc., to one spot at the side furthest from the woman holding it, when by a dexterous jerk they are all thrown out, and the corn left clean. The reference in Amos ix. 9 is to this cleansing process, whereas in St. Luke xxii. 31 the

sifting was to be that of temptation, which Satan hoped would prove the Apostles to be but light grain, and therefore rejected.

After the grinding of the corn is over, other domestic duties will claim the housewife's attention; one of these is washing the family clothes. This, in order to save the trouble of fetching water, is generally done at the spring or near the well. Cold water is almost invariably employed by the peasants, and in the winter and spring they often take advantage of pools left by the rain in various spots, to get rid of arrears of washing. On such occasions they generally go in considerable numbers, and a great deal of gossip and scandal goes on, if we judge by the proverb: 'It is better to sit between two funerals than between two washerwomen.'

Soap is but sparingly used, wood ashes, a kind of sandy clay, and sometimes the maiden-hair fern, which is very abundant in damp places, taking its place very largely. The wet garments are also beaten well with a heavy piece of wood, a process which drives the water forcibly through the pores of the material, and no doubt aids considerably in the cleansing process.

Matches are pretty generally used now by the people for obtaining a light, but flint and steel are still by no means uncommon, and are frequently used by men for producing fire for their pipes. The first matches were brought to the village of Bir Zeit, already mentioned, many years ago by a young man. He had had occasion to go to Lydd in the maritime plain, and in the market there

saw matches for the first time. They were then sold singly, or two for a small coin in value rather less than a farthing; so the young man invested in eight of them, and the next day, on his return home, he gathered all the men of the village in the evening in the guest-house, and having told them about the matches, he produced the eight, and solemnly struck them one after another in their presence, to their great surprise and wonder.

As a rule the women cook pretty well, considering the roughness and fewness of their utensils. The Fellahîn have ordinarily only one regular meal in the day—viz., that in the evening. If food is taken at other times, it is a piece of bread only, a few figs, a bunch of grapes, or a cup of coffee. They have no meal corresponding to our breakfast, and often go to their day's work without eating anything; this fact will explain our Blessed Lord's hunger when, after, perhaps, a night spent in prayer, He sought fruit on the barren fig-tree, although He had just come from the house of the hospitable Martha (St. Matt. xxi. 17-19). I was riding out one afternoon to a village, several hours' journey from Jerusalem, and about halfway overtook a peasant. After a little conversation, he asked me if I had any bread with me, as he had walked into the city that morning from a place some twenty-five miles distant, had transacted his business there, and had now got about halfway back, no food having passed his lips since his supper the previous evening.

As the afternoon begins to wane, the Fellâhah will begin her preparations for the evening meal.

If the family be well enough off to have rice, or if guests be expected, she will take two or three handfuls of that grain from the jar in which it is stored, and, after carefully washing it, will place it in a tinned copper vessel without handles, and set it to cook over a fire of sticks between two stones in a corner of the courtyard of the house, or, if the weather be wet, over a small fire of charcoal in a little clay brazier inside the house. Perhaps some meat, with tomatoes, onions, or other vegetables, will be set on to cook in another pot, or the vegetables alone; for every family, however poor, tries to have a little 'cooking' for the evening meal—that is, a hot dish, even if only boiled vegetables or herbs, into which to dip the dry bread. Lentils are a very favourite article of diet, and where people are too poor to get meat for a festival, or other occasion of rejoicing, they at least try to have a dish of this vegetable. The meat is usually boiled, but sometimes at a feast they roast it; fowls, too, are occasionally split open and roasted in the oven where the bread is baked.

The supper is eaten soon after sunset, all those present partaking together, if not too many to do so at one time, but if too numerous they do so in relays. When the food is ready, if there are many people, a large bowl or dish is filled with *Bûrghal* (cracked wheat) or boiled rice, should the family be comfortably off; the meat, if any, is placed on the rice, and the gravy, in which there is always salt, is poured over it, or placed in small bowls for the people to help themselves as they please. If

there be no meat, *Leben* (sour milk) or boiled vegetables are served in separate vessels with it, to moisten and give a flavour to the rice. At a *feast* both meat and vegetables will be used.

The tray or dish is placed in the middle of the floor, and loaves of bread are put round it. Having previously washed their hands, the guests, or members of the family, squat round the bowl, and as they plunge their hands into the mass, if Moslems, they say '*Bismillah*' (In the name of God); if Christians, they use some other formula showing their creed. They take up lumps of food with the right hand (it not being proper to use the left, more especially among the Moslems), adroitly rolling up the rice or wheat with the fingers so as not to drop any grains on the way to the mouth. Spoons are coming more and more into use, especially among those who have come much into contact with Europeans. Large draughts of water are drunk, but only towards the end of the meal. If there are guests, especially if any of them be of honourable estate, the master of the house waits on them while they eat, and however good the food may be, or however abundant, he usually apologizes for the poor supper he has offered them, and urges them to eat more. When they have finished, he and the family, or the less-distinguished guests, take their places round the bowl. Should no strangers be present the whole household eats together, but if there are male guests the women do not eat with them, but have their meal afterwards in another room. After eating the hands are washed

again with soap and water, the water being poured over the hands by a servant or one of the family (see 2 Kings iii. 11). In the case of guests the host will often perform this office for them, handing them a towel or cloth with which to wipe the hands after washing. Supper over, pipes are lit and unsweetened coffee handed round.

When the Fellahîn are on a journey or out at work in the fields, they content themselves with dry bread eaten with a few figs, raisins, or such like, to give flavour to this otherwise tasteless fare. The two little fishes which the lad, probably a shepherd-boy, had with his five barley loaves that spring day by the Sea of Galilee, when Jesus fed the five thousand, were, as the Greek (δύο ὀψάρια, St. John vi. 9) shows, food of this latter kind—two of the tiny dried fish, plentiful then as to-day, and cheap enough for one even as poor as he to afford.

The men smoke a great deal of tobacco in small pipes of reddish-brown clay, with wooden stems, varying in length from a few inches to three or four feet. These pipes are, however, being largely supplanted by cigarettes, the papers for making them being imported in little books or packets, and sold everywhere. The nargileh, or hubble-bubble, is also much smoked, by women as well as men, a special kind of tobacco, imported from Persia, being used. It is customary to offer these to the principal guests on the occasion of formal visits, as at funerals, weddings, etc.

But the woman's work does not end with the

more strictly domestic labours we have already described. Drawing water has ever been in the East essentially a woman's work, and in the early morning and evening, especially, the women and girls go down to the fountains or wells to fetch the supply for the house. This is brought in earthenware jars containing 1 to 2 gallons, or in water-skins, the former being carried on the head, and the latter slung on the back by a cord passing over the forehead. The water when brought is emptied into a large earthen jar standing in one corner of the room. In cases, which are very numerous, where the village is on a high hill a long distance from the water-supply, this work is very arduous, and must tend to shorten the lives of the women.

Bringing the supply of firewood is another duty which falls to the lot of the women, and entails severe labour. In some districts the firewood is obtained from scrub some miles distant, and parties of women and girls may be met, bearing on their heads long, heavy faggots of boughs of oak, terebinth, arbutus, etc. In other parts, where no scrub or wood is found, they collect bundles of the Netesh thorn, or the white-flowered broom, called Retem, the 'juniper' of 1 Kings xix. 5 (the Arabic and Hebrew names for the plant being the same), a shrub very characteristic of the comparatively upper slopes of the hills leading down to the Jordan Valley. In the maritime plain and other parts, where the dhurra, or white millet (*Sorghum vulgare*), is much grown, the dry stalks left in the fields after the ripe

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FLOCK RESTING AT NOON.

WOMEN GOING TO DRAW WATER.

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ears have been cut off are collected and stacked about their houses for use as fuel in the winter-time.

The women all know something of needlework, and some of them are very skilful at it. The ordinary work, such as is required in making their everyday clothes, does not call for remark; but some of the gala dresses are very handsome, with much fine needlework on them. The veil worn over the head by the women of some villages has this kind of work in it. These veils are made of a very coarse kind of native cotton cloth, and are worked with various patterns and devices in coloured cottons and silks. This work much resembles that of the old-fashioned 'samplers,' which I can remember seeing, in my boyish days, old women making in some rural districts of England, and which may still be occasionally seen framed and hung up in country cottages. Some of the devices on these veils are very elaborate.

In some of the gala dresses worn by the peasant women there is in front a piece of elaborate needlework in various colours, of which the accompanying photograph will give some idea. This takes a long time to make, and girls who are betrothed busy themselves for months before the wedding in working at these dresses, which are often worth a considerable sum of money.

The women generally are very fond of fancy needlework, and the teaching of it in mission-schools is one of the best ways of attracting otherwise unwilling scholars. In the Lebanon the women

used to be very skilful in a fine kind of embroidery, or needlework, on a thin, light material. These embroidered veils or scarves were reversible—that is to say, there was no wrong side, the pattern being so cleverly worked that it was the same on both sides of the material. Beautiful specimens of this work can be occasionally met with still, and they command high prices. The spoils of needlework of divers colours on both sides, which Sisera's mother pictured her triumphant son as bringing back with him after the battle with Barak and Israel (Judg. v. 30), may very likely have been work of this description.

The Fellâhat are very fond of ornament, and, where they can afford it, wear a great deal of jewellery. On their wrists and arms they have heavy bracelets, and on their fingers thick clumsy rings. These ornaments are made of silver, but most of it has a high percentage of alloy. In addition to these bracelets and other ornaments they wear rows of coins on their head-dresses. The original object of this latter custom, and also, no doubt, partly of that of wearing jewellery, was the safe custody of their money. It is only of recent years that there have been any banks in Palestine, and these, of course, have been confined to the few towns; and even where they have existed, their management has by no means been always such as to inspire the natives of the country with confidence. Consequently women have for ages invested their money in jewellery, or put it on their head-dress, which neither a creditor nor the Government could

touch, though the woman herself could use it. One of the commonest methods of raising money is for a woman to pledge her ornaments, and no disgrace whatever attaches to such a transaction.

CHAPTER VII

DOMESTIC LIFE (*continued*)

LEBEN, or sour or curdled milk, has been mentioned more than once. This is made chiefly in the spring, when, owing to the abundance of pasture, milk is plentiful. It closely resembles our curds and whey, and is made by the women by putting into the fresh milk either some old dried Leben, kept for the purpose, or else rennet made from the stomach of a kid, and not from the calf, as with us. The Arabic name *Leben* is given it on account of its whiteness, and is from the same root as the word 'Lebanon,' that, again, being applied to the two mountain ranges bearing that name because of their spotless brilliancy when covered with the snows of winter. It is, when clean and properly made, very nice, the slightly acid taste being peculiarly grateful to a hot and tired person in that warm climate, and is said to have in such circumstances a soporific effect.

Cheese is also made in a similar manner by means of rennet, and pressed into small hard cakes, something like our cream cheeses, but firmer and not so rich.

Churning butter is another occupation of the

women, chiefly in the spring and early summer. The milk is put into a large skin, similar to those used for carrying water; this is then suspended between the legs of a tripod of sticks. Two women usually do the work of churning by pushing the skin backwards and forwards between them; the splashing about of the milk in the skin, which must not be filled too full, gradually separates the butter. Much of this butter is not used as such, but is clarified by heating over the fire, a kind of saffron being added which gives it a yellow tint, and a peculiar flavour very distasteful to most Europeans, but to which one gets accustomed after a time. This clarified butter, or *Semaneh*, is stored in jars or skins for future use, being largely employed in cookery for frying meat, eggs, vegetables, etc., and for mixing with the boiled rice. Failing this Semaneh, the fat of the tail of the Oriental sheep is much used. These fat tails, common to several varieties of sheep in Syria, Egypt, Arabia, and East Africa, are considered very valuable for cooking.

But besides these more or less directly domestic duties, the peasant women work hard in other ways. Many of the Fellahîn make their living by growing fruit and vegetables for the towns, and most mornings of the week crowds of Fellâhat may be seen coming into the towns carrying on their heads baskets of radishes, cauliflowers, tomatoes, and other vegetables, according to the time of year; or grapes, figs, peaches, apricots, and other fruit; also fowls, corn, eggs, jars of water, skins of

vinegar, and bundles of grass or green barley. Not only do they come thus from the nearer villages, but often even from places two, three, and four hours' distant. They squat about in the narrow street of the town, or in the open market-place, to sell their wares, the baskets on the ground before them, and their babies in their laps, or hung up in their bags, asleep, on the wall behind. It is an interesting sight to see these women come into one of the towns on a bright spring morning after, perhaps, two or three days of rain. Here is a group of women, laughing and chattering, each with a heavy basket on her head; several have loads of huge pink radishes, larger than our carrots, with their fresh green leaves; another has two or three large cauliflowers, which would make a Covent Garden salesman open his eyes in wonder—for, in spite of the curse which seems to rest on the land, it can still produce marvels in the way of fruits and vegetables; yet another has a basketful of fowls (tied by their legs), which now and then flutter and squall in their vain attempts to escape. A little behind is a second group following two or three men, their lords and masters, who stalk majestically on in front, carrying only guns or clubs, while their wives meekly follow with their heavy baskets, some containing billets of olive-wood for burning, others wheat, with a few eggs on the top; while another, in addition to a load of edible snails, has her baby slung at her back in a bag. Having disposed of their wares in the town, and made various small purchases, they set off

home again; and riding back to the city in the afternoon one meets the same groups one saw in the morning, now returning to their villages, their baskets on their heads with the various articles they have bought—a few yards of calico, a pair of coarse native shoes, a little tin lamp and an old wine-bottle containing petroleum, a box or two of matches, and a packet of tobacco for the husband; or, it may be, a sheep's head or piece of tripe, or some such dainty to eat with the dry bread at the evening meal.

Meanwhile their tongues are busy, money being almost the invariable subject of their conversation —the few piastres they got for their produce in the morning, the price of the various things they have bought, or fines or taxes they have had to pay to the Government. And so they disappear in the gathering dusk, with hardly a thought beyond to-morrow, and how to live from day to day under the ever-growing burden of poverty and taxation, and with no hope worth the name in the life beyond the grave.

Nor is this all. During the spring, while the corn is growing, the women go out almost every day to gather the weeds which are found in quantities among the corn, for fodder for the cattle and horses; they may be often seen carrying large bundles of these weeds on their heads for long distances, this, for what reason I know not, being considered specially women's work. They often assist also in the reaping of the harvest, gathering the olives, grapes, and figs. While the ploughing is going on,

the women and bigger girls assist by hoeing up the corners and odd bits of ground where the plough cannot reach; and I have even seen a woman ploughing, but this is very rare.

The clay corn-bins which are a conspicuous object in the house of every Fellâh, and which form one of the most important articles of furniture, are also made by the women. Clay mixed with *Tibn* (crushed straw) is the material employed in their manufacture. After being dug out of the hillside, it is broken up, moistened with water, and kneaded up into a tenacious mass with the straw, and the bin is carefully built up piece by piece, a little being done each day, so that a large bin (*Khâbiyeh*) takes many days to complete. When finished, they are well dried in the sun before being brought into the house. When one enters a Fellâh's house, and the eye has become accustomed to the dim twilight which nearly always reigns there, one of the first things one notices is the row of these bins at the back of the room, or else serving, in one of the larger houses, as a partition between two rooms. In them the year's supply of wheat, lentils, barley, dried figs, etc., is stored. There is a small hole, *Rozaneh*, at the bottom, through which the contents are withdrawn as required. East of the Jordan a very large kind of bin called *Ikwârah* is found. A framework of poles and reeds is first made in the house between the arches which support the roof, this framework being afterwards plastered with clay. This latter kind of bin probably formed the 'barns' mentioned in the

parable of the Foolish Rich Man (St. Luke xii. 18), as barns in the sense in which we understand the term are unknown in Palestine. At Kerak, Madeba, and other places east of the Jordan, corn is also stored in sacks in the spaces or recesses between the arches of the houses. In Old Testament times there used to be a practice of storing corn, etc., in the ground, old cisterns being, no doubt, chiefly used for the purpose. This would be done more especially at disturbed times. I have seen this plan resorted to occasionally in some districts, more particularly in Moab and other parts of Eastern Palestine.

Of furniture, as we understand the term, an ordinary peasant's house will be entirely devoid, but there will be a variety of cooking utensils and articles of household use. The corn-bins have already been described ; next in bulk to them will be a huge water-jar : this usually stands near the door, in a corner anyone can reach, for the Fellahîn are a thirsty race and drink large quantities of water. In its capacious mouth reposes an earthenware jug, or tin mug, with which to get the water.

Other jars of various sizes and shapes will be found, differing somewhat in the several districts of Palestine, from the *Jerrah*, holding a gallon or more, in which the women bring the water from the well, to the *Sherbeh*, a little jar with a spout, and holding one or two pints, from which they drink. In some of these jars will be stored olive-oil (which is much used in food), pickled olives, honey, and *Dibbs* (grape

molasses). A few round trays of brightly-coloured straw worked in patterns will be seen hanging on the walls, with a sieve and a few rough wicker baskets for carrying vegetables to market, or bringing olives or figs from the fields. Two or three large wooden bowls will be in another corner; in them the dough is kneaded and taken to the oven, clothes are taken to the spring to wash, and sometimes also the evening meal is served in one of these. They are often made by the wandering gipsies, who sell them to the peasants, and I remember a Christian peasant (a Greek) once bringing a new one he had just bought from these wanderers, and asking me to pray over it that it might be clean for use for food.

Smaller bowls of wood or earthenware, used as dishes, a mortar of stone or wood for pounding coffee, a brass pot for boiling it, a few tiny cups without handles in which it is served, an iron ladle in which the coffee beans are roasted, and a few spoons with a knife or two, will complete the inventory of the goods of an average peasant's house.

While on the one hand the richer peasants will have other things, especially articles of European manufacture, on the other the very poor will have much less. On the floor will also be one or two mats, made of a species of papyrus, or else of a stout grass, and on these the people will sit, chairs being quite unknown. In a recess in the wall the bedding will be piled. This is extremely simple,

consisting of a mattress, three or four inches thick, stuffed with wool, cotton, or rags; a pillow, usually filled with straw; and one or more thick wadded quilts (2 Kings viii. 15), which form the only covering. No bedsteads are used, the mattress being spread on the floor at night, and rolled up and put away during the day.

The dress of the children is simplicity itself. When past the period of swaddling-clothes, a single loose garment with short sleeves, and opening a couple of inches in front, is all they have. On the head is a small cap, often ornamented with beads and charms of various kinds, while other charms, sewn up in square or triangular pieces of leather, will be hung round the child's neck, especially if it be a boy. As the children get older their dress will be a reproduction on a small scale of that of their parents, except that they are usually barefoot, and that, in those parts of the country where turbans are worn, the boys do not have them till they approach manhood.

The dress of the men differs somewhat in various parts of the country, and the same articles of clothing will be called by different names in different places. The garment worn next the skin is practically always a kind of long shirt of white calico; the sleeves of this vary somewhat. East of the Jordan they are worn very long and pointed, the dependent point being used to carry money, tobacco, and various little odds and ends, which are knotted up in it, instead of being put in a pocket as with us.

This is often confined at the waist by a leather strap, into which the loose skirt of the garment is tucked when the man is at hard work. Over this shirt a long garment like a dressing-gown, of some coloured material, is worn ; it reaches nearly to the heels. For ordinary wear a coloured cotton, lined with unbleached calico, is used, but for gala dress silk, woven in Damascus or the Lebanon, is the material employed ; it is confined round the waist by a coloured belt of elastic cotton webbing, with a space for keeping money, large sums being often carried in these 'purses' (St. Matt. x. 9) on a journey.

Occasionally very wide, baggy trousers of white calico, fastening at the ankles, are worn by the peasantry, but only by those who are better off. Over this coloured garment a short jacket of coloured cloth, with patterns in black braid, is worn on Sundays and feast-days. An outer cloak is also much used ; this is of various kinds, shapes, and colours. About Jerusalem the kind most worn is a square cloak of wool and cotton, woven in stripes of black and white. It is heavy and warm, and will turn any ordinary shower, though it will get soaked through with a long exposure to heavy rain. About Nablus a shorter and coarser garment, red and white, is used, while east of the Jordan, again, a very long light black cloak reaching to the heels is ordinarily employed. In very cold weather the men wear a *Furwah*—that is, a coat or jacket made of lambskins, dressed with the wool on them. They are very warm, and are largely used by muleteers,

camel-drivers, and others whose work obliges them to sleep out much at night.

In many parts the head-dress is a somewhat complicated one: first of all comes a close-fitting white skull-cap of cotton; then a heavy thick cap over that, of felt or some woollen material; and over that, again, a red fez, with a black or dark blue tassel, while over all, like the brim of a hat, comes the turban. This turban is of various colours, which have for the most part a religious or other significance. Thus, a white turban almost always denotes a Mohammedan, more especially one who holds some post under the Ottoman Government; but this is not invariable, as members of the Yemen faction, elsewhere described, are distinguished by a white turban, and at Bethlehem it is the custom for Christians, who have in the course of their business had to travel much among Moslems, to wear it. A red turban indicates those who belong to the faction of Kais; while a green turban shows a Sherîf, or noble—that is, a lineal descendant of the Prophet Mohammed; it may be seen on the heads of beggars, or men engaged in the most menial occupations, as well as of those of more prosperous circumstances. I have, however, been told by Moslems that it is now sometimes adopted by people who have no real right to the title of Sherîf. In other districts, especially those where there are many Bedouin, or where the people come much in contact with them, the head-dress is of quite a different character, consisting of a large handkerchief, usually black or of some dark

colour, but not unfrequently white, with a heavy double coil of cord made of wool or goat's hair to keep it in place.*

On their feet the Fellahîn wear thick, clumsy shoes or boots of various descriptions. There are the long boots coming halfway up the calf of the leg, made of bright red leather, with a tassel in front and iron-guarded heels. These are chiefly worn in Eastern Palestine. Then there are the ordinary boots, with thick, heavy soles, of camel or buffalo hide, and red uppers, coming to a point above the heel and the instep; shoes of a lighter make are also worn.

On entering a house, church, or mosque, the boots or shoes are removed. To enter wearing them would be considered most irreverent in the case of a sacred edifice, and disrespectful in the case of a private house. When a number of people are gathered at a house—*e.g.*, to greet a stranger of importance—extraordinary collections of boots and shoes in all stages of wear may be seen, and one wonders sometimes how the respective owners ever find their special property again.

In order to fasten up the sleeves out of the way when working, a cord, called *Shemar*, is worn over the shoulders, passing round the upper part of the

* This latter head-dress is of comparatively recent date, the red cap and turban being universally worn in olden days, and probably in use in our Blessed Lord's time. There is a traditional saying of Mohammed to the effect that when Moslems should give up wearing the turban their honour (or nobility) would be gone.

arms. Into it the ends of the sleeves are tucked, thus drawing them back, and leaving the lower arm bare and free.

East of the Jordan a leather belt, with straps attached in front and behind, coming over the shoulders and crossing on the chest, is worn over the inner shirt, and called *Jennâd.*

The dress of the women is in some things similar to that of the men. When about their work they usually wear only one long garment, with a girdle of some cotton or woollen material round the waist. It is made of cotton dyed with indigo, or plain white, or broad stripes of red, green and white. In some cases, in cold weather, they wear a wadded jacket, and occasionally even a lambskin coat like the men; but more often the poor creatures go about, even in the coldest weather, with no extra clothing. At weddings and on high-days and holidays, instead of the simple garment just described, a much more elaborate one is worn of dark blue material, with coloured stripes and lines, and sometimes a few gold threads running through it. Into the front of this dress a square of the needlework already described is inserted, while, where it is worn, a gorgeous coat of coloured cloth, with bright braiding round the edges, completes the costume, the dress of the Bethlehem women being particularly brilliant.

The women of Nazareth and the districts round wear a long white inner garment of cotton, and over it another similar one, but of coloured material, reaching to the feet, and open in front as far as the

waist, where a girdle keeps it in place. At Es Salt, Madeba, Kerak, etc., the women's dress is most unbecoming. It consists of a single garment of dark blue calico, about twice as long as the wearer is tall, the extra length being pulled up inside the girdle, and allowed to fall over it all round, reaching nearly to the feet, thus forming a sort of sack.

The head-dress of the women varies greatly in the different parts of the country. The *married* women of Bethlehem have a peculiar one, which is worn only by them and the women of the neighbouring village of Beit Jala. It is made of a fez, with some material to stiffen it, and covered with red cotton, and has two ears at the bottom on either side. To these is fastened a chain of silver, or some baser metal, with large silver coins attached —ten in number in the case of the richer women, and seven in that of the poorer (a bride has twenty). The lowest central coin is, whenever possible, of gold, being really a kind of medal made expressly for the purpose, and worth some £3 or £4. Along the front of the head-dress, over the forehead, is one row of coins (or more if the woman be rich), or, if she be too poor to have real money, some imitation coins are used instead. Over the whole a veil, consisting of some 3 yards of fine white cotton material, is thrown. It was a veil, no doubt, of this kind which Ruth wore when she gleaned in the fields of Boaz outside Bethlehem, and into which he poured the six measures of corn (Ruth iii. 15). The head-dress entirely conceals the hair, it being considered improper for the

peasant women to show any of it, and is often worn night and day.

The women of the villages about Jerusalem wear a rather different head-dress, the high hat being replaced by a close-fitting cap, to the front of which one or two rows of coins are securely fastened. A metal chain hangs from it, passing loosely under the chin; and from its lowest part a large silver coin is suspended. Many of the coins on this singular head-dress are large, and the total weight amounts, where there is a double row of them, to several pounds; yet so accustomed to it do the women become, that, should they have to lay it aside for any reason, they suffer from severe headache. So well known is this, that a short time ago a Moslem woman in a village near Jerusalem, who had to give her head-dress as a pledge for the repayment of a sum of money her husband had borrowed, bound a heavy piece of metal on her head instead, and so prevented the headache. In public the women always wear a veil, not over their faces, however, but over their heads, the face being uncovered. It is considered improper for them to be seen by a man without their veil. It is, nevertheless, often laid aside when they are engaged in hard work, or, indeed, in other occupations; and many a time in the villages, turning suddenly a corner of one of the narrow winding lanes, I have come on a little group of Fellâhat busy at work without their veils, but the moment I was perceived the veils would be replaced on their heads, or, if they were not sufficiently close at hand, one of the

long, voluminous sleeves of their dress would be thrown over till I had passed. The women of Moab and Gilead and those in Galilee do not wear either of the head-dresses I have just described, but instead of them have a dark-coloured piece of cotton material, folded several times, bound round the head, covering the forehead, but leaving the crown of the head bare.

CHAPTER VIII

DOMESTIC LIFE (*continued*)

THE Fellahîn are as a rule a healthy race. The open-air life they lead, the fact that they rarely use stimulants, and their simple habits, all tend to keep them free from many complaints common to other climates and conditions of life. They are, nevertheless, no more immune from sickness than any others of the human race, and in times of illness they are as a rule very helpless. All, both Moslems and Christians, have unbounded faith in charms, and use them extensively both to ward off sickness and to cure it when it comes. There are, however, certain remedies known to them which are not without their value. Cauterizing with a hot iron is resorted to for lumbago, rheumatism, diphtheria, and other ailments, and some persons have a high reputation for their skill in administering this drastic remedy, which they employ with a boldness produced by their absolute ignorance of human anatomy. The results, however, are *sometimes* very good, especially in cases of acute inflammation. Some of them are very clever in setting broken bones. They value highly European medical and

surgical skill and European drugs, and medical missions have done wonders in winning the hearts of the people and in disposing them to listen to the message of the Gospel.

Malarial fever of different types is the commonest of all maladies; and there are certain localities which have an unenviable notoriety in this respect, such as some parts of the plains of Sharon and Jezreel, and certain villages in other places. One such village on the western slopes of the Jebel el Kuds became particularly malarious during the present generation. This is said to be due to the cutting down of some pine-woods which formerly surrounded it—such, at least, is the opinion of its present inhabitants, and there seems to be no reason to question its correctness. Quinine is well known to them as an antidote for this disease, and they value it highly. A very virulent type of this fever, with symptoms resembling those of yellow fever, occurs occasionally in the plains, and is probably due to contaminated water.

Dengue fever, or a fever closely resembling what is now known in England as influenza, is by no means uncommon, and sometimes occurs in epidemics. It is characteristically called in Arabic *Abu rikab*, or 'the father of the joints,' from the severe pains in the joints and bones which usually accompanies it. Small-pox is also very general. Inoculation for this disease is still largely practised, especially by the more ignorant Moslems, and helps to spread the contagion and to raise the death-rate. During a severe outbreak of it in

1901, a Khatîb in a village in the Jebel el Kuds inoculated twenty-six boys from the body of one man who had died of small-pox, with the result that every one of them succumbed.

The people have, however, a high esteem for vaccination as a preventative of small-pox, and there are now native vaccinators who go about the country practising their art. They charge a bishlik (about sixpence) for each person operated on—a relatively high fee for the country—and make a very good living by it. During the outbreak just referred to, a lady missionary vaccinated hundreds of children and adults in some of the villages near Jerusalem, and thus probably saved the lives of scores of people.

Measles is another disease which is at times very fatal among the children, and this almost entirely from the utter carelessness of the parents, the deaths being chiefly, not from the disease itself, but its sequelæ. They have as a rule little or no idea of nursing the sick ; they mean well often enough, but do not know what is wanted. Then, too, their fatalistic ideas come in, especially in the case of the Moslems : if it be God's will that the sick recover, he will recover, but if not he will die, so why should they trouble ? A European doctor, who had had wide experience in the country, once told me that he had on several occasions discovered that, when he had given up hope of a patient's recovery, and had told the relations this, they took no further trouble about the sick person, giving neither food nor medicine ; consequently, after

finding this out, he never told the friends what his view of the case was, and his hopes (or the reverse) of recovery.

Perhaps in no country in the world is blindness and defective sight so common as in Palestine. Scarcity of water has, no doubt, much to do with this and many other complaints. When it is difficult for the people to get water enough for drinking and cooking, one cannot wonder that they do not wash often. Eye diseases are very common, but are undoubtedly aggravated by want of cleanliness and by flies. It is a common thing to see children suffering from these complaints with a number of flies settled on the discharging eyelids, the little things not seeming to mind their presence; and by them, of course, the disease is communicated to others. Much blindness is caused by the apathy of the people, who will put off going to a medical man till too late. In many and many a case a perfect cure could have been effected, but the patient has delayed until the sight is hopelessly gone.

The mortality among children, infants especially, is very great. Much of this is caused by the absolute ignorance of the young mothers as to how to treat their children. Improper food produces much disease among them. As soon as they are able to eat anything at all solid, they are given the same food as the rest of the family; and it is no uncommon thing to see a little child, unable to stand, eating raw cucumber or sour, unripe grapes. The cauterization also, already mentioned, and

which is used as freely on children as on adults, is no doubt responsible for a good many deaths among them, the poor little things, especially if weakly, being unable to stand the shock and pain.

The Fellahîn, although a strong race in many respects, yet feel the cold of winter intensely, more particularly in the mountains, and every year there are cases of people dying of cold and exposure, especially in times of snow. In one case, which occurred recently, a man was going home one winter's afternoon from Jerusalem on a donkey which he had hired from his own village. Some time after dark the donkey arrived alone at his owner's house, with things belonging to the man who had hired it in the saddle-bags. This led to a search being made, and the man's body, partially eaten by hyenas, was found by the roadside. Nothing was missing, so it was, clearly, not a case of robbery and murder; but no doubt he had fallen from the donkey and died of exposure.

Like all hot countries, Palestine is liable to epidemics of cholera from time to time. During the last epidemic but one, the village of Bir Zeit in the Jebel el Kuds was one of those attacked by it. A young man from the village died of the disease in the town of Nablus. His mother fetched his clothes home and washed them *in* the spring from which most of the villagers got their drinking-water! As a natural consequence, the cholera very soon broke out with great violence. It was the grape season, and some of the people were living out in their vineyards. One of the leading men

of the village, a man of great force of character, persuaded the rest of the people to go out, only three men, who had volunteered to do so, remaining to bury the dead. Arrangements were made for supplying the different families with food, water, etc., without running any risk of carrying infection. It was on a Tuesday that the disease first showed itself, and by the following Tuesday thirty deaths had occurred out of a population of from two to three hundred. Not a single other case occurred after that day, and it never reappeared in that village during that outbreak. Of the three men who so nobly volunteered to bury the dead, all escaped, the first of them dying thirty years afterwards, the other two being still alive. The incident is a notable one, as there was no European hand in it from first to last, and it shows what the Fellahîn are capable of under wise and energetic native guidance.

Leprosy* is still found in Palestine, and lepers

* The following notes on leprosy in Palestine at the present day have been kindly furnished me by Dr. Wheeler, the senior medical missionary of the London Jews' Society in Jerusalem :

1. Fish in this country plays no part in causing leprosy. The Jews who consume the greatest part of the salted as well as fresh fish, and in some cases even of decaying fish, hardly ever suffer from leprosy. A few years ago there was a case of a woman, but she came from Salonica. In the villages of Ramallah, Beit Haninah, Ain Arik, etc., and among the Bedouin, practically no fish is eaten, and yet it is just from them that the greater number of lepers come.

2. Leprosy is undoubtedly contagious; a special bacillus

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may be seen outside Jerusalem, Nablus, and Ramleh, sitting by the wayside begging. They are provided for to a certain extent by the local authorities, who in these three places have set apart houses for them, and give them a certain amount of bread every day. They also receive a great deal of food and money from the people generally, as alms.

The Fellahîn seem to be specially subject to leprosy—that is, more so than the towns-people. A leper is regarded as a dead person, and, as already mentioned, the Christians consider that, if a married

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has been found. However, cases of contagion are very rare.

3. It has not yet been quite decided whether leprosy is strictly hereditary; but heredity plays the most important part in the transmission of this disease.

4. It is possible for leprous persons to have healthy children. There are now in the asylum here five children between the ages of five and twelve who have been born of leprous parents. Up to this time they have shown no sign of leprosy; they are still under observation. There is a man now living whose mother was a leper; he married about twelve years ago. He and his wife and children are all at present quite healthy.

5. It has not been established by experience here that a child born of parents who become lepers afterwards need necessarily develop leprosy itself.

6. The tubercular form is the commonest in this country. It is impossible to state at the present moment what is the chief factor in the causation of leprosy. The inhabitants of this country live upon almost the same kind of food everywhere, and although most of the lepers come from the villages, there are some villages in which no case of leprosy has been reported.

person becomes a leper, the husband or wife, as the case may be, is free to marry again.

There is at Jerusalem a fine hospital, under the care of the Moravian Brethren, specially for lepers, where they are most carefully tended.

There are various hot springs both east and west of the Jordan, such as those at Tiberias, to which people resort for various diseases. In the Zerka Main (Callirhoe) are some which are very famous among the people of Moab and the Belka for their healing properties. Persons who have no children will bathe in them in hopes that they may obtain them, as the people believe strongly that the waters have this effect.

Among remedies known to the native doctors may be mentioned one for rabies; it is an infusion of the leaves and flowers of a low, strong-smelling shrub with bright yellow flowers, which are succeeded by long pods; it has two different native

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Amongst the Bedouin, who are supposed to lead a healthy life, there have been several cases of leprosy. Although leprosy is contagious, it would seem that before it is transmitted the person receiving it must have a 'hereditary disposition.' It is a curious fact that in this country for centuries, in spite of no sanitary precautions being taken, leprosy has neither decreased nor increased. It is found in certain families which seem to have a 'hereditary predisposition.' In the leper hospital here there is a special department for the bringing up, by hand, of children of leprous parents. They are removed from their parents immediately after birth, and kept exclusively in a separate apartment; they are thus kept from all leprous contamination. These experiments will be watched with deep interest.

names—*Litîn* and *Salmônch*. It is evidently a powerful drug, and a medical man told me that he knew of a case in which a man who had been bitten by a mad dog, and was treated with it, died of Bright's disease brought on by the use of it.

In most of the large villages there are one or two idiots, who seem to be harmless as a rule. A proverb evidently derived from the Bedouin says: 'No tribe but has its idiot.' There are a few lunatics also, perhaps more than might be expected *a priori* in a country like Palestine, where the rush and hurry of Western life is practically unknown. Near Bethlehem there is a Greek monastery where insane cases are taken, the violent ones being chained to the wall. They profess that some cases are cured here, but, as with many other things in the East, statistics are entirely wanting. The lunatics, like the idiots, are nearly always harmless. I have never myself come across one who was dangerous. They simply wander about, one of their characteristics being their dislike to wearing any sort of clothing. They, in common with persons afflicted with the shaking palsy, are held to be under God's special protection, and are therefore rarely unkindly treated.

When a person has died, they have a great objection to announcing the fact directly to anyone. Thus, for instance, if a man goes to break to another the news of his father's death, he begins in a roundabout way; says he is ill, and gradually tells him more and more, till at last the other

guesses what has happened, and breaks out into bitter lamentations.

Many have an idea that the death of a domestic animal, more especially if it be at all a valuable one, such as a horse of good breed, is instead of the death of the owner or of a member of his family.

On the day of a death, the relations, friends, and neighbours bring food, bread, etc., to the house of the family to eat. It is supposed that those in the house of death cannot cook or attend to such things, and at first they are not supposed to eat at all, from grief, and many do not eat for some time. In some places it is the custom to thus supply food for fifteen days. On the last day the relatives of the dead kill one or more sheep, make a feast, and invite a number of people. This is considered a satisfaction for the sins of the dead person.

Palestine being essentially a hot country, burial has to take place very soon after death. No coffin is used, the body being carried on a bier to the grave merely wrapped in a shroud or in the ordinary clothes. At a Greek funeral the relations of the dead buy candles from the priests, and, lighting them, give one to each person present to show that the life of the deceased was good and pure as the light. With the same idea at the grave, while the service is being read, cotton dipped in olive-oil is placed on the corpse.

Among the Moslems the body is ceremonially washed before burial, this being part of the duty of the Khatîb in case of men, while the village midwife usually performs this office for women.

In the case of influential people a large crowd usually accompanies the bier, and, as it is considered a meritorious act to assist in carrying this, there are always plenty of persons to take the dead to the burying-ground. If the deceased be a Moslem of position, the bier is preceded by persons carrying palm branches (in token that the deceased has been victorious, or, in other words, has attained Paradise), and men reciting passages from the Korân ; and where he has been famous as a dervish or sheikh, red and green banners with passages from the Korân embroidered on them will be borne in the procession, accompanied by the beating of cymbals.

When a grave has been dug deep enough, stones are placed along both sides at the bottom, leaving between a space wide enough for the corpse ; and when this has been laid in its last resting-place, slabs of stone are put over it, resting on the two rows of stones. The interstices are then carefully plastered over so that no earth can touch the body. In rocky ground, however, the grave is sometimes so shallow that the wild animals can get to the corpse. Strolling one day outside the walls of Kerak, in the land of Moab, I met a poor woman in terrible distress ; she had come to look at the grave of her child, which had been buried the previous day, only to find that the hyenas had dug up and carried off the body.

The graveyards are little cared for, being in marked contrast to the Welys, or tombs of saints. They are rarely, if ever, enclosed in any way ; and,

as among the Fellahîn tombstones are rare, it is sometimes most difficult to detect a burying-ground, and one may easily walk over an old grave without being the least conscious of the fact (St. Luke xi. 44). In a few Moslem villages I have noticed a large blue sweet-scented iris planted on the graves; this plant is called *Subeyhah*, the diminutive of the word 'Praise,' its sweet scent being thought to be acceptable to God, as the praises of the dead.

In some cases the burial-grounds belong, not to the village or church, but to the particular family or clan, only members of that family being allowed to be buried there.

The dead are sometimes buried in a sort of vault called *Fustakiyeh* or *Khashkhâsheh*. This is sometimes a natural cave, but more often a hole in the ground with four rough walls and a barrel-shaped roof, a doorway being left at one end. In the case of burial in these vaults, the body is merely laid on the floor wrapped in a shroud or in the ordinary clothes, the doorway being then built up with large stones laid in mortar. A considerable number of bodies can be placed in one of these vaults, but they are usually employed only for the very poorest or strangers. Occasionally others will be temporarily buried there—for example, in winter, when the weather is too stormy to allow of an ordinary grave being dug, the body being afterwards transferred to a proper grave, as the people dislike being buried there. It was probably in order to build such a vault that the priests (St. Matt. xxvii. 7) purchased the potter's field, as the removal of the

clay would make a large hole suitable for the purpose, and thus lessen the expense. In the same way now a hole caused by the removal of stone for building is sometimes utilized by the Fellahîn for making one of these burial-vaults.

After the funeral, in the case of Moslems, food is often cooked and placed on the grave for the poor to eat, this being, it is supposed, reckoned in the other world as though done by the dead person, and so as adding to his merit, and consequently increasing his hopes of eternal life.

This is also done in many cases on Thursdays for some time after the death, and for the same reason. Again, after Ramadhân (the Moslem month of fasting) is over, the people go to the burial-ground, when (if there has been a death in any family during the past year, and if the relations can afford it) food is placed there for the poor.

If a sheikh or influential person dies, word is sent to the people of his own and neighbouring villages, and they come bringing money or clothes, which they put on the grave in honour of the dead. These are taken by the relations, who in return make a feast for those who attend the funeral. But in some places, instead of clothes and money, rice only is put on the grave.

Sometimes after the death of a sheikh, or other important person, a favourite camel will be bound on the grave, and left there to die; such a victim is called *Dâhiyeh*. The idea is probably that of its spirit accompanying its former owner in the spirit-world.

The Fellahîn greatly dread any disturbance of their bones after death, and to do this is looked upon as a great sin. One of the worst curses that can be pronounced on a man is, 'May your bones be disturbed!'

Thursday is the day on which, according to Moslem belief, the spirits of the dead are supposed to visit the graves. For this reason the people go out to the burial-ground on that day, and sit among the graves. Blind men also are sometimes hired to come at these times and recite passages of the Korân there. They believe that the spirits know that the graves are thus honoured, and that, though we cannot see them, they can see us 'as we see oil in a bottle.'

After a death, especially that of a person of consideration, friends from the villages round go to 'comfort' the relations. They take a goat or sheep with them, kill it, and make a feast to console them. This may be done at any time from five days to a year. They stay a day or two with the dead man's relatives, and then gradually disperse to their own homes. A similar return visit has to be paid by the relatives subsequently. These occasions are often very burdensome to the poorer people, as they borrow money to meet the expenses, the debts thus incurred hampering them for years afterwards; but as they would be considered stingy, an epithet an Arab dreads almost more than any other, if they omitted to observe the custom, they are afraid to drop it.

CHAPTER IX

SHEPHERDS, HERDSMEN, ETC.

The occupation of a shepherd is contemporaneous in its origin with the birth of the human race, and shepherds have throughout the Bible narrative played an important part in the history of the world. Abel was a keeper of sheep; Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, and other of Israel's heroes and teachers, have been shepherds, and have fed their flocks on the hills and plains of the Holy Land or the neighbouring countries; while the Scriptures teem with incidents connected with, and illustrations drawn from, the life of the shepherd and the sheep.

The dependence of the sheep on the shepherd, and the intimacy between the two, is infinitely closer than anyone acquainted with our Western flocks would at all suppose, as we shall see. The shepherd it is who goes out with the flock morning by morning, who chooses each day their pasture, leads them when thirsty to spring or brook, and finds a cool and shady place where they may rest during the heat of the day. He it is who guides them safely home at eventide to village or sheep-

fold, guards them from robbers, and protects them from wild beasts. In the bosom of his inner robe he carries the young lambs when weary; as the flock grazes, scattered over the plain or along the hillside, he watches over it with ceaseless vigilance, warns the stragglers, goes after the lost ones, and at night, when in the wilderness, lies down to rest in the midst of them. He knows each of his sheep individually, often gives them names, to which, when called, they respond, and his voice is familiar to them, and they will recognise and follow it out of many others.

Goats and sheep, flocks and herds, have ever constituted one of the principal sources of wealth in the East, and have been always one of the chief objects of the raids of the Bedouin and other marauders. This latter is well shown by the fact that the ordinary word in Arabic for spoil, or booty taken in war, is *Ghanâmeh*, from *Ghanam* (sheep). To-day both goats and sheep are of the utmost value to the Fellahîn. The milk drunk in the country is almost exclusively that of goats and ewes (cows are scarcely ever milked, except in the towns), and it is from this that the butter, cheese, and Leben are made. Their wool and hair are spun into coarse thread; of the former, strong rough cloth for garments, carpets, and bags, is woven, and of the latter is manufactured twine and rope of various thicknesses, a stout material for saddle-bags, nosebags for horses and mules, corn-sacks, and the black haircloth for the shepherds' tents. Their flesh is eaten, the horns are made into knife-handles, the

SHEPHERD AND SHEEP.

PEASANT WOMAN, SHOWING HEAD-DRESS.

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skins are tanned, while the hides of the larger goats are stripped off entire, and when dressed become the water-skins so familiar to all dwellers in the towns and cities of the Orient.

The life of the shepherd in the East is a much more arduous one than that of their English brethren. With the exception of the vineyards and little plots of garden ground where cucumbers, melons, tomatoes, etc., are grown, the country is unenclosed, and therefore the shepherd cannot leave his flock in a field * during the day, and return at night knowing that he will find his sheep there; he must accompany them throughout the day in all their wanderings over the plains or along the mountain-side, and never lose sight of them for a moment. Morning by morning he takes them out, stays with them all day long, and at evening

* The Hebrew term for 'field,' in by far the greater number of passages where that word occurs in our Bible, has no such connotation as that of the English word—viz., 'an enclosed portion of pasture or arable land'—but means merely the land *outside* the city or village—in other words, the open country. The modern Arabic term for such land denotes uninhabited or, more exactly, uncultivated land, and is often the exact equivalent of our word 'wilderness' (*not* 'desert'). Such terms as 'down,' 'common,' 'moor,' would more nearly connote the idea conveyed by the Hebrew and Arabic words than does 'field'; though even this at one time probably meant the open country, and under the form 'fell' (compare the Dutch 'veld') does so still. Such lands in Old Testament times were inherited, bought, and sold, equally with vineyards and other enclosed portions (see Jer. xxxii. 43, 44, where the Hebrew is in the singular).

brings them back to village or fold. When thus putting forth his sheep in the morning, bringing them home at night, or leading them through the day to fresh pasture, he always goes before his flock (St. John x. 4); but when the sheep or goats are grazing he lets them scatter about, following them wherever they go, keeping a watchful eye over them, and warning them whenever they are going into any danger, or attempt to stray into forbidden places. Often on the hillside the shepherd may be seen thus watching his charge, leaning on his staff or club, his form as he stands on a projecting rock, or little knoll, silhouetted against the deep blue sky. Should a sheep stray too far from the flock, he warns it by a shout, and should this be unheeded he will throw a stone *near* it, so as to turn it in the direction he desires. I have never seen any of them purposely throw a stone *at* a sheep or goat, though I have known a careless aim result in a broken leg. Each shepherd has his own peculiar cry, with which all his sheep are familiar, and which he always uses when he wishes to call them to him or to get them to follow him.

Some years ago I was staying the night in some shepherds' tents in the Jebel Ajlûn (Gilead). The tents, to the number of ten or twelve, were pitched in a wide circle enclosing a considerable area. In the evening some six or seven flocks were brought within the camp for protection. In the morning, when the time came for the shepherds to take their charges out to pasture, instead of attempting to separate their respective flocks from the crowd of

goats and sheep scattered promiscuously over the enclosed space, each man went a little way beyond the ring of tents, and standing there uttered his special call. Instantly the whole mass of sheep and goats was in motion, and as the shepherds continued to call the several flocks separated themselves, each streaming out of the camp in the direction of their respective guides, and in five minutes not a goat or sheep remained inside. Looking again shortly afterwards, the various flocks could be seen diverging to all points of the compass, each following its own shepherd (St. John x. 4, 5).

The shepherds often give names to their sheep. These names are descriptive of some trait or characteristic of the animal, as Long-ears, White-nose, Speckled, and so forth. Not unfrequently the sheep get to know their names, and will answer to them when called (St. John x. 3).

Every shepherd worthy of the name knows and recognises his charges by their appearance, and it is said that even in a large flock will thus distinguish each one. When he goes over them to ascertain if all are there, either at coming home at night or on going out in the morning, he can tell, without counting, whether one be missing or not. Should one or two be wanting, he knows exactly which they are, and can describe them accurately. If at any time a shepherd thus finds that one of his sheep is missing, he will, as a rule, go at once in search of it. Not very long ago a shepherd, belonging to a village no great distance from Jerusalem,

discovered, as his sheep passed before him into their fold at night, that one of them was not there. Accordingly, he set out to search for it. For three days he wandered about seeking it, till at length he came upon it in the wilderness, held fast by one of its fore-feet, which had become wedged in a crack of a rock where it had climbed to find herbage.

But it is not only to keep them from straying that the shepherd must accompany his sheep. Wild beasts are by no means unknown in Palestine to-day, in spite of the increase of modern firearms. Especially is this the case in the remoter and more rugged districts where the population is very sparse, and the villages few and far between; while, when impelled by scarcity of food they will haunt the villages and suburbs of the towns. A Bethlehem woman, who was our cook for some time, has told me that once, when she was a girl, going out of her father's house very early one morning, she came on a bear just outside.

Hyenas are common, and wolves by no means rare, and the latter will sometimes attack the sheep in broad daylight. In the summer of 1901 I was itinerating among the villages around Jerusalem. One day I sent my tent on in advance to a certain village, bidding my servant to have it pitched by the time I arrived. On reaching the place, I found the tent erected on the edge of the village, in a fig-garden, and a number of the villagers awaiting me. We exchanged greetings, and I had hardly entered my tent when, a sudden commotion arising, I ran out to see what had happened. Two flocks of

sheep, led by their respective shepherds, were descending the opposite side of the valley and converging towards the village. Just at this moment the men around my tent caught sight of a huge gray wolf ('as large as a donkey,' remarked one of them, with characteristic Oriental exaggeration) stealthily making its way towards the sheep, no doubt with the hope of picking up a straggler. The shouts and cries of the villagers warned those in charge, and alarmed the wolf, who, finding he was discovered, slunk off in another direction. A few days before this occurred, at another hamlet in the same district, a wolf got by night into a courtyard where a number of sheep were folded, and killed two of them before it was detected. This was an unusually audacious thing for a wolf to do, as they generally shun the precincts of human habitations. Probably he was impelled by hunger, as that year, from some unknown cause, there was a remarkable scarcity of the smaller animals on which they prey.

The year previous to this was one of abnormally scanty rainfall in Western Palestine, with consequent scarcity of pasture for the flocks. On this account one of the peasants belonging to a village I know well took his flock of forty sheep to the Belka, the great tableland east of the Jordan, which once formed the territory of Sihon, King of the Amorites. After an absence of many weeks, having heard that rain had fallen, and that there was grass in the field (Zech. x. 1), he decided to return to his village, and accordingly started on his way home. Sheep are proverbially slow travellers

(Gen. xxxiii. 13, 14), and after several days' journey the shepherd found himself one evening in the wilderness of Judea, to the west of Jericho. He had watched alone for several nights, travelling during the day, and was utterly tired out. Gathering his flock around him, he lay down to rest, and was soon fast asleep. While he slept six wolves came down on the sheep, and when he awoke next morning forty mangled carcasses lay about him. When the poor man, heart-broken at his loss, got back to his own village and told his tragic tale, the villagers, with that kindliness which is one of the fine features of their character, joined together to help. One gave a single sheep, another two, another three, and so on, thus making up his entire loss.

Another man told me how once he was out with his sheep in a deep, partially wooded valley. As he stood watching the flock, the movement of some animal making its way through the scrub down the further side of the valley caught his eye. At first the creature was too far off for him to make out what it was. Presently it reached a stream which flowed along the bottom, and as it stopped to drink he saw that it was a large wolf. Crossing the brook, it made swiftly for the sheep. The man hurried down to meet it, but the beast was quicker than he, and before he could intercept it, had caught a sheep which had strayed too far from the rest of the flock. The wolf had seized the unfortunate creature by the throat, and was attempting to drag it away when the man came up with it.

Leaving its victim, it turned boldly on the man, and, seizing his knee in its powerful jaws, buried its fangs in the flesh. A fierce struggle for life ensued, as the peasant was unarmed. At last, however, he managed to get hold of a large stone, and gave the wolf a blow between the eyes, which partially stunned it and made it let go its hold. Following up his advantage, he completely disabled it with further blows, and finally crushed its skull.

But wild beasts are not the only enemies shepherds have to guard against. Thieves and robbers are not uncommon, especially where the villagers are camping out with their sheep in the open country. Some years ago I was riding home to Jerusalem with a friend, rather late at night. The sun had set two or three hours previously, and there was no moon. About an hour from Jerusalem we passed a large flock of sheep, with their shepherd in the midst of them, sleeping out a little off the road. As we drew near we noticed a man stealthily creeping up towards the sheep, under cover of a pile of stones, with the evident intention of stealing some of them. We forthwith alarmed the shepherd, and the would-be robber, finding that he was detected, decamped.

Such attempts are usually made under cover of darkness. Sometimes several men together will organize a raid. They creep quietly up from different sides till they are in close proximity to the flock on which they have designs. They then fire several guns simultaneously, and the startled sheep spring up and scatter in all directions. The robbers seize

as many as they can conveniently take, and are gone before the owners can do anything. In the case of such an attempted raid which occurred within my own knowledge not long ago, a man succeeded in saving several flocks. Three or four shepherds were spending the night together in the open country; robbers came down on them in the way I have described, and the sheep began to run in all directions. Some of the shepherds, in a panic, ran off to a village near by for help, but one of them, with great presence of mind, stood up in the midst of the sheep and loudly uttered his special call, at the same time whirling his Abba, or cloak, round his head. At the sound of his voice the sheep stopped in their flight. The waving of the cloak caught their eye, and, following its motion, they came circling round and round, getting gradually nearer and nearer to the shepherd, till at length, with the exception of one unfortunate animal, all had been brought back. But for the prompt action of this man nearly all the sheep would have been lost.

In most flocks there is a leader, either a goat or sheep. It carries a bell, and is frequently ornamented by the shepherd. If it is straying too far, and the shepherd warns it by throwing a stone so as to fall near it, it will usually come back at once to him; but should it not do so, the man threatens it with his stick, when it will instantly run close up to him.

Sheep or goats stolen near a town are usually disposed of at once by the thieves to the butchers.

This is so generally recognised by the Fellahîn that, should a shepherd miss any of his charges, and have any reason to suspect that they have been stolen, he commonly sets off immediately for the city. Arrived there, he goes to the slaughter-house to see if he can find his missing charges; should he succeed in doing so, the animals will be returned to him. If, however, he be unsuccessful, he inquires what butchers have killed that day, and, going round to their shops, asks to see the heads and hides of the animals. In the event of his identifying any of his property, he takes the head of the slaughtered animal to the authorities, and claims, and frequently obtains, compensation for it.

In cases where a sheep or a goat has strayed from its own flock, and, as sometimes occurs, has joined another, should its former owner discover it, he can claim it. If he can prove the time and place of its disappearance, and these tally with the circumstances under which it joined its present companions, his claim will be allowed, and the animal be restored to him. Not only so, but if the straying animal be a ewe or she-goat, and have in the meanwhile borne lambs or kids, both it and its offspring will be restored to the original owner when once the claim is fairly established. I knew of a certain case in the Jebel el Kuds where some years elapsed before a straying ewe was traced, but when this was at last done, not only the sheep itself, but also all its progeny, amounting to twenty-one head in all, were returned to the former proprietor. There is among the Fellahîn a kind of

code of honour in this matter, and once let such a claim be fairly established, but few of them would venture to repudiate it. Some sheep are peculiarly prone to straying, and the peasants have a special term for such—*Nâdirch*, or isolated.

The rule mentioned by Jacob (Gen. xxxi. 39) still holds good in Palestine. Whatever be stolen from a shepherd, by day or by night, he has to make good, the supposition being that the loss was due to negligence or lack of watchfulness on his part. This, however, does not apply in the case of a raid, nor if the sheep have been carried off by wolves.

As the summer comes on and the weather gets hotter, the herbage becomes dry. The sheep and goats begin to need water, which is not the case while the pasture is green and succulent. The flocks are then usually watered once a day, about noon, from a stream or spring, or, if these highly-prized blessings do not exist, from wells or cisterns. Many of these cisterns are out in the open country, on the site of some ancient village which has disappeared ages ago, or found dug in a long-forgotten garden or vineyard. In such cases a large stone or pile of stones is placed over the well's mouth, partly to prevent the water being stolen, and partly to keep animals from falling in. This practice dates from remotest antiquity, as we learn from Gen. xxix. 1-10 and other passages. Sometimes a huge circular block of stone, in shape resembling a giant millstone, is placed over the well. This stone has an opening in the centre

large enough to admit the easy passage of a bucket filled with water. In this opening a closely-fitting pear-shaped stone, like a stopper, is inserted, so smooth and heavy that it is almost impossible to remove it with the hands alone. It is a beautiful sight to watch, as mid-day draws on, the various flocks, led by their respective shepherds, converging towards some large spring, and then patiently awaiting their turn to come at their master's bidding and quench their thirst in the cool rivulet.

Throughout the hotter months the sheep are taken to some shady spot to rest during the middle of the day. A grove of trees, the shadow of an overhanging rock, a cave, a ruin—all are utilized for this purpose. From time immemorial the shepherds in Palestine have done this, and the practice is referred to in the words of the Bride (Cant. i. 7): 'Tell me where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon.' In the deep valleys which descend from the tableland of Moab, and those in the hills about Es Salt (Ramoth Gilead), the perennial streams are bordered with a thick growth of tamarisk, oleander, and tall reeds. Here I have often seen the shepherds bring their flocks at noon to drink, and then rest in the deep, cool shade of the bushes by the water's side. David had, no doubt, often done the same when feeding his father's sheep, and had some such scene before his mind's eye when he penned the words (Ps. xxiii. 2): 'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters.'

In Carmel, the Jebel Ajlûn, and other wooded

districts, the shepherds, when in late summer and autumn the pasture begins to get scanty, often cut down the large boughs of trees, especially those of the evergreen oak, that the sheep and goats may browse on the foliage. At such times there may be often seen in these districts an expectant flock round one of these trees, waiting patiently while the shepherd climbs up and with his axe chops off the more leafy branches. These, as they fall, are eagerly seized by his hungry charges, who quickly devour the foliage and tender shoots. This custom is referred to in Ezek. xxxiv. 29, R.V., and Mic. vii. 14.

The practice is very destructive of the trees, not from the removal of the branches, but from fire. The boughs are left where they fall, and as the process is repeated year after year a pile of sticks gradually gathers round the tree. These are as dry as tinder, and a light carelessly thrown by a passing traveller or a grass fire sets the whole in a blaze. I have seen oaks which probably took hundreds of years to grow, and which could ill be spared in such a treeless land, thus destroyed in a few hours.

In some parts of the Lebanon, during the autumn, when the silkworm season is over, sheep are regularly fattened with mulberry-leaves, which are carefully gathered by hand for the purpose. The leaves are put into their mouths, and they are forced to eat even when unwilling to do so. The women may be actually seen working the poor animals' jaws with their hands to induce them to go on

OAK GROVE, JEBEL AJLÛN.

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masticating their food. This hand-feeding is, however, only done in the case of the sheep, of which every family that can possibly afford it buys one at least to feed up for the winter's supply of cooking fat. The Syrian breed of sheep has a very large broad tail consisting almost exclusively of fat, and when thus fed up this tail becomes of an enormous size, yielding, when the animal is slaughtered, many pounds of a very delicate fat, which is highly prized for cooking purposes. In the Mosaic ritual it was specially ordered to be offered to God (Lev. iii. 9, R.V.).

In the winter and early spring many of the shepherds from the villages overlooking the Ghôr take their flocks down there to graze. If a fairly abundant rain has fallen in the autumn in the Jordan Valley, owing to its warm, almost tropical climate, a rich growth of vegetation springs up there long before the uplands have begun to get green. At such times thousands of goats and sheep from the villages in the hill country may be seen there knee-deep in the luxuriant pasture. The shepherds who accompany these flocks sleep out with them in the open, scorched by the fierce sun by day, and shivering in the relatively cold air at night—just as Jacob complained to Laban, 'in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night' (Gen. xxxi. 40).

In sparsely inhabited districts, the shepherds who wander about with their flocks, as did Jacob's sons (Gen. xxxvii. 12-17), to find pasturage for them, sometimes make camps, pitching their tents for a

few days in one place, and moving on to another when the grass in the vicinity has been eaten up. This is the thought in Hezekiah's lament (Isa. xxxviii. 12)—here in the morning, by noon gone, and not a vestige of them remaining.

In hilly districts caves are often used by the wandering shepherds as shelter for their flocks by night. Especially is this the case in the wilderness of Judea, that bare, treeless tract of limestone hills which stretches from the central ridge of Palestine to the Dead Sea and lower part of the Jordan Valley. Here it is common to find caves whose roofs are blackened by smoke, with little heaps of ashes on the floor, and other signs of human occupation, while a low semicircular wall of rough loose stones guards the entrance. These are the sheepcotes (1 Sam. xxiv. 3). A notable instance of them is the huge cavern of the Mugharat ul Jai in the Wady Suweinit, near Michmash, and which is probably the rock Rimmon where the 600 fugitives from the almost exterminated tribe of Benjamin took refuge (Judg. xx. 47).

The late Dr. Edersheim, in an interesting passage on the appearance of the angels to the shepherds announcing the Saviour's birth ('Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah,' vol. i., pp. 186, 187), infers from a paragraph in the Mishna that the Temple flocks in the vicinity of Bethlehem lay out all the year round. Owing to the geographical position of that place, there would be no difficulty about this, even in the coldest weather. The little town is situated on an outlying spur on the eastern

side of the great ridge or backbone which, with one single break only, runs down the entire length of Palestine. In front—that is, in the direction of the Dead Sea—the ground falls so rapidly that it would be possible in quite a short time, and at no very great distance from it, to descend as much as 1,000 feet, and at this point snow would never lie.

I well remember riding out one bright Sunday morning in winter, some years ago, to conduct an Arabic service at Bethlehem. A heavy fall of snow had taken place during the night, and the country all round Jerusalem was covered with a white mantle. But when I had crossed the low olive-clad ridge to the south of the Plain of Rephaim, and could look down into the valleys around Bethlehem, I saw that they were entirely free from snow. At some 700 or 800 feet below the town it ceased abruptly, and there was a sharp line of demarcation, running as straight and true as if drawn by a rule, along the slopes of the eastern hills.

Now, the phraseology of the passage (St. Luke ii. 8) would seem to require that the shepherds should have been some little distance below the town. They were 'abiding in the field'—that is, the open country (see note, p. 163). But in all probability the slopes immediately around Bethlehem were then, as now, terraced and planted with olives, vines, fig-trees, etc., so that the spot where the shepherds were watching on that memorable night must have been some place below the zone of cultivation. Tradition is too often an untrust-

worthy guide as to the location of sites, but in this case it is certainly noteworthy that the spot which it points out as the scene of the appearance of the angelic visitant lies far below the town. Other facts point in the same direction, one of them being that in the valleys it is considerably warmer, and the grass springs earlier there than on the surrounding hills; consequently, in winter, flocks are often taken down there, as well as to the Ghôr, to graze. I once passed a cold night in January in the Wady Môjib (the Arnon), east of the Dead Sea. The hills above us were white with snow, but none was to be found in the deep valley; while a large flock of goats and sheep, under the care of two shepherds, was folded for the night in a large shallow cave within two or three hundred yards of the spot where my tent was pitched.

Flocks are also sometimes taken down into these valleys from the higher villages on the approach of bad weather, in order to escape the cold and wet, and to find pasture, which in the event of a snow-storm would, in the uplands, be buried. This precaution is specially needful in the case of goats, which are much more sensitive to cold and wet than sheep, as the fleeces of the latter form a much more efficient protection than the comparatively scanty hair of the former. One of the last occasions on which I stayed at Es Salt (the ancient Ramoth Gilead) was in mid-winter. One morning I discovered that no milk was to be had in the town, and inquiries elicited the fact that the weather threatened a heavy fall of snow (which

came in a day or two), and all the goats and sheep had been taken to the low-lying valleys in order to escape it.

Though goats and sheep are, from one point of view, among the most valuable of the peasants' assets, yet in one particular direction they do great harm to the country. I refer to the way in which they destroy the young trees and shrubs. This indictment applies more especially to the goats. There is hardly anything green which these animals will not devour, while sheep are much more fastidious. On this account goats will thrive where sheep would starve. In the open country, where there is scrub or brushwood of oak or terebinth which would, if left a few years, develop into the forest trees which are such a lack in Palestine, the flocks may often be seen browsing on the leaves and tender shoots. In this way they effectually prevent the growth and development of the woods, which are at the present time probably the most urgent need, from an agricultural point of view.

In the late autumn, when pasture is becoming very scarce, the owners of vineyards will, after the grapes have been gathered, allow the flocks to be turned into them. It would, I think, be hard to parallel the picture of dreary desolation which a vineyard presents after it has been thus eaten down by goats; and no more fitting or more graphic illustration of the utter ruin of the country could be given than Jeremiah's application of the figure to the condition of Judah and Jerusalem after the Chaldean invasion (Jer. xii. 10, 11).

The shepherds often have dogs with them, not, as in England, to drive the sheep, but to help in guarding them, and to give notice of the approach of robbers, human or otherwise. Though they are poor mongrel curs compared with our collies, yet they are very efficient, and are often really brave. Three or four years ago a pair of leopards was haunting a wooded district in Central Palestine, and one of these shepherd dogs, in the discharge of his duty, boldly attacked one of them, and was killed while thus endeavouring to guard the flock.

The shepherds are rarely, if ever, the owners of the entire flock, though not unfrequently a portion of the sheep and goats may belong to them. For the most part, especially in Western Palestine, they are merely hired to do the work. The rate of wages varies a good deal in the different parts of the country, but more especially with the number of sheep or goats of which the flock consists. In some districts the shepherd receives a certain amount of corn per head per annum. More commonly, particularly if the flock be small, he receives a trifling money payment, about tenpence per head per annum, his food, and one or two suits of clothes* yearly, according to the agreement with him. In yet other places his remuneration is the milk of the flock every other day. This latter only holds good, as far as I am aware, in the neighbourhood of towns where there would be a ready sale

* Compare the account of the wages given by Micah to the Levite from Beth-lehem-judah whom he hired to be his priest (Judg. xvii. 10).

for milk, Leben, butter, and cheese. In any case, the shepherd is allowed free use of the milk of the flock for himself (1 Cor. ix. 7). In the country east of the Jordan the shepherd receives every tenth lamb or kid each year, and thus in time becomes the owner of a good deal of the flock. This method of payment is often preferred to any other, as the shepherds who are thus paid are considered to become more skilful, and to take better care of the sheep and goats, than those who are simply hirelings.

In the maritime plain, as soon as the harvest has been reaped, many shepherds from the villages in the hill country bring their flocks down there to pasture. The owners of gardens in the district build large enclosures for these flocks, with a room for the shepherd, and allow the free use of them for the sake of the resultant manure, which is highly valued for the vegetable gardens and as fuel for the ovens. In these folds the goats and sheep are often separated at night, although during the day they graze promiscuously. Where this is done the sheep sleep in the open courtyard, while the goats are in the inner room. The reason which the Fellahîn give for this separation is the fact, already mentioned, that the goats, having a much scantier natural protection than the sheep, are far more sensitive to cold and wet (especially to snow), and consequently require more shelter than they do. The sheep, too, cannot endure a close atmosphere, and must be in the open air if they are to continue healthy.

In the spring the young kids and lambs are usually not allowed to go out with their mothers, as they would not stand the incessant walking, but are kept at home. When a little older they are sent out for a short distance, in small flocks, each flock being generally in charge of a boy, who thus begins his training for the work of a shepherd.

The shepherds are almost invariably armed. Many carry some sort of firearm, frequently of a very antiquated pattern, from the old flint-lock musket down to a muzzle-loading fowling-piece. Others have only a club or bludgeon, perhaps supplemented by a dagger or sling, or both. This club is about 2½ feet long, of oak or other heavy wood, with a head or knob as large as a good-sized orange, and from which it is colloquially termed *Dubbûs*, or 'pin.' It is in the hands of a strong man a most formidable weapon, and with such a club it is easy to understand how David could have killed either lion or bear, or any other wild beast that he might have had to encounter (1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35). About Es Salt a club of a different kind is used. Instead of having a knob at the further end, it is, for the last third of its length, somewhat curved, with sharp angles, a section of this portion being as follows ◇ Like the *Dubbûs*, it is made of oak, and it is said that a powerful man has been known, with a backhanded stroke from such a club, to cut a man's head off—a statement which is by no means incredible. The club is often carried by being thrust into the girdle, where it is available at a moment's notice, and yet leaves both hands free.

A 'scrip' (1 Sam. xvii. 40) usually completes a shepherd's equipment. This is a leather bag, the skin of a kid, or other small animal, stripped off whole. In it the shepherd puts his pipe, flint and steel, tobacco, and flute, and any other little things he may need. Food, also, will not unfrequently be carried in it, especially if he be likely to sleep out with his flock—a few loaves of bread, a handful of dried figs, or some olives, to give a little flavour to the dry fare. It was, I think, most probably the contents of some shepherd-lad's scrip that furnished the five barley loaves and two little dried fish with which the Lord fed the five thousand.

Cattle are tended much in the same way as the sheep during those seasons of the year when they are not used for work. They are sent out in herds to graze, with one or more herdsmen to look after them. They are much smaller than our cattle, and generally in but poor condition. Most of the ploughing and threshing is done by their means, as will be described when we come to speak of those occupations. In the villages the cows are rarely if ever milked, and the flesh is never eaten. In the towns it is only of late years that cow's milk was procurable, or beef to be seen in the butchers' shops.

Like the sheep, the cattle are taken into the Jordan Valley to graze in years when there is much grass there. During the time they are in the Ghôr, the herdsmen who tend them (and also the shepherds who bring their flocks down there) receive special

remuneration, according to the number of days they are absent from home. These men keep a record of the time spent there by cutting a notch on a stick for each day they are in the Ghôr, much in the style of the old English 'tallies' in the days of our forefathers. Boys are commonly employed to herd the cattle when grazing in the open country round the villages, but when sent to a distance they are committed to more responsible hands. Among the Druzes, the old men who are past ordinary manual labour are set to tend the herds, a custom which is the object of much ridicule on the part of their Christian neighbours. Though extensively employed for ploughing and threshing, I have never seen cattle used by the Fellahîn to draw any wheeled vehicle.

Around the Sea of Galilee, in the district about Carmel, and the neighbourhood of Gaza, buffaloes are found to a small extent. They are very powerful, and are used for ploughing and similar work; but though closely resembling, if not identical with, the Central African species, the Palestine buffaloes seem very harmless and inoffensive.

The camel is to-day, and probably always has been, the chief beast of burden, in the strict meaning of the term. It is only within the last twenty-five years that there have been any roads in Palestine suitable for carts or carriages; and what roads there are now are very few, and chiefly about Jerusalem. Hence, practically all the heavy traffic of the country is carried on by means of camels. Some of the peasants get their living by camel-

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PREPARING FIREWOOD FOR MARKET.

CAMELS CARRYING STONE.

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driving. They own one or more of these animals, and hire them out to carry goods from the seaports to the interior, from town to town, or from the villages to the cities and towns. Thus, nearly all the building stone used in Jerusalem is brought into the city from the quarries on the backs of camels, and, notwithstanding the existence of the railroad between Jaffa and Jerusalem, much of the heavy traffic between the two places is still carried by means of these animals. From the districts east of the Jordan, especially the rich corn-lands of the Belka and Hauran, nearly all the grain is sent to the western towns, and for shipment, by these means.

The camel is by no means a pleasant animal with which to deal, for while in some ways exceedingly stupid, he has, on the other hand, a very good memory, and never forgets or forgives an injury. A young camel-driver whom I know was on one occasion taking a load of charcoal to his village. His camel was going along very sluggishly, and he gave it three or four cuts with a switch; this the beast greatly resented. On arriving at his destination, he asked one of his brothers to unload the camel, and fasten it up in its shed, as he felt sure, from the habits of these animals, that it would take the earliest opportunity of paying off its score. The brother did so, feeding the beast and securing it for the night. Later in the evening the young man had occasion to fetch something from the shed where the camel was stabled. He rather incautiously got within reach of the animal, which

was watching its opportunity. Quick as lightning the creature seized the man by the arm with its huge jaws, making the teeth meet in the flesh, and shook him as a terrier shakes a rat, finally flinging him, bruised and bleeding, with great violence against the wall.

A Fellâh from a village in Southern Palestine, who owned a number of camels, once told me how, on a certain occasion, he beat one of them for laziness. Next morning he started early, with some other animals, for Jerusalem, and was absent for about a fortnight. By the time that he had got back to his village he had forgotten all about the incident, but not so the camel. The instant the beast caught sight of him it rushed at him, hunted him all over the place, and would undoubtedly have killed him, had not some men come to his rescue and beaten it off.

Camels are subject to a good many diseases. On one of my numerous missionary journeys I was sitting on a threshing-floor talking to a little group of men, when I suddenly heard a voice behind me say: 'Would you look at this camel, sir?' Turning round, I saw a huge snarling beast standing over me. 'What's the matter with it?' I asked. 'Well, it's got the toothache,' was the reply, 'and I thought perhaps you could pull its tooth out for it.' Certainly the poor creature seemed in much pain, for it had a huge swollen cheek, caused by a large abscess at the root of the tooth. But a camel, even when in good health, is, to put it mildly, not a sweet-tempered animal; and one with the tooth-

ache—— Well, I hope I was truly sympathetic, but I must confess that I was much relieved to be able to say that I had no instruments with me.

The camels are, I believe, always obtained from the Bedouin, who rear very large numbers of them, which they sell to the Fellahîn, frequently stealing them from one another for the purpose.

The Arabic word for camel is from the same root as one of the commonest words for 'beautiful,' a term which in its masculine and feminine forms is frequently used as a name for boys and girls. For long I used to wonder how the Arabs could possibly associate the idea of beauty with the ill-tempered, mangy, evil-smelling beast with which one is so familiar in Palestine. But I found that one reason of their ugliness is the custom the Fellahîn have of keeping their camels close-clipped, and when I had seen the breed owned by the Turcomans, with their clean, slender limbs, shaped like those of a greyhound, and their long necks, covered with great dark tawny manes—almost like those of lions—I ceased to wonder at the derivation of the word.

CHAPTER X

AGRICULTURE

In no country of the world, probably, is agriculture of such supreme importance to the inhabitants as it is in Palestine. Palestine has, as far as is now known, no mineral wealth, neither are there any manufactures other than the few local industries, which are barely sufficient to supply the local needs. Consequently the country has nothing in the way of exports with which to pay for its imports, except the products of the soil, as wheat and barley, oil and wine, etc.

The word 'Fellahîn' (more correctly 'Fellahûn') is the plural of the word 'Fellâh,' a word in the form of the 'noun of intensity,' as Arab grammarians call it, the form usually employed for words indicating trade or occupation, and derived from the verb *falah*, to cleave or divide—*i.e.*, the earth; another 'measure' of this same verb, *aflah*, means to prosper, as the peasantry were formerly the wealthy people, the cultivation of the soil being, with cattle-rearing and sheep-keeping, the chief source of wealth. The Fellahîn, thus, are the ploughmen, or farmers, and in any account of them

the subject of the cultivation of the soil must take a foremost place.

The soil of Palestine is for the most part a dark reddish-brown, naturally suggesting the connection between Adam and the ground from which he was taken; especially is this colour noticeable when the soil is newly turned, either by the plough or in digging.

It will, perhaps, be simplest to speak first of the tenure of the land. Till within recent years—that is, within the memory of many still living—the land was held by the village as a whole, and not by the individual peasants. Since, however, the Ottoman Government commenced to levy taxes on the land and crops it has become chiefly the property of individuals, who must have title-deeds for the same, duly registered in the Government offices.

In some cases, however, land is still held in common, and before the ploughing begins it has to be divided among those villagers who wish to cultivate any of it. Not all will wish to do so; but in one village I know, where land was held in common, the following method was adopted for dividing it: As soon as the number of would-be cultivators was known, the land was marked out in an equal number of portions, so as to give each an equivalent number of portions of good, bad, and indifferent soil. Each candidate brought with him a leaf of some tree or plant, and these leaves were stuck into a lump of clay. A man, not a candidate, but who knew the land well, was called in and given this lump of clay; he did not know who had brought the different

leaves, and therefore was perforce impartial. Taking each leaf, he said, 'Such-and-such portion to the owner of this,' and so on till all was allotted.

There are three descriptions of property, viz.: *Amîrî* (vulgarly *Mîrî*), or Government land; *Mulk*, or freehold; and *Wakf*, ecclesiastical lands, or lands in mortmain. The land of cities and villages, with their suburbs, is freehold; but the open fields are Government land, their tenure answering, perhaps, more nearly to our copyhold than to anything else, the Government being, however, the person who claims the ground rents. No one may build on this Government land without permission from the authorities, as it thereby becomes freehold, and so is lost, as it were, to the Government. But anyone buying a vineyard, or any other piece of such property, has a right, should he so desire, to build himself a dwelling-house on it, but even in this case formal permission has by law to be obtained. Such lands, if not cultivated for a series of years, lapse to the Government. The ecclesiastical lands (*Wakf*) are the property of mosques, churches, schools, or other institutions, religious or charitable. Included under this head are lands in mortmain. Persons sometimes leave property to their families, but, in order to prevent its being sold away, grant it by formal deed to a church, mosque, etc., on the extinction of their family, so that as long as there is any descendant of the testator existing the property cannot be claimed by the church or other institution, nor will the law allow it to be sold out of that family. No lands coming under either

description of *Wakf* can be sold, except by permission of the Sheikh ul Islâm in Constantinople. This difficulty is sometimes got over, however, by a legal fiction known as *Istibdâl*, or 'exchange,' where the property which it is wished to sell is supposed to be exchanged for a better one. Besides the above descriptions of property, there is a great deal of land, and much of it some of the best in the country, which is the Sultan's personal property, and which is farmed for him by an agent.

When land is sold, if there be trees upon it, these are not sold with it unless this is specially agreed upon, and entered accordingly in the deed of sale. The purchase by Abraham of the cave of Machpelah and the adjacent land, with the trees (Gen. xxiii. 17), shows how very ancient is this custom. It is no uncommon thing for the land to belong to one man, and the trees to another. I know of a case, and doubtless there are other similar cases, where the ground belongs to one village, and the trees on it to another.

In another case land was purchased for philanthropic purposes by a committee, of which I was a member, but we were only able to buy a third of the trees—that is to say, we did not buy out and out one-third of the total number of trees on the estate, but a right to a third of their produce.

Should the owner of the trees allow them, by his neglect, to disappear, he loses all right over the land, and cannot replant them. On the other hand, the owner of the trees can oblige the owner of the land

to till it, as otherwise the trees deteriorate, and their value is consequently diminished.

Before describing the actual operations of agriculture, a few words are necessary about the climate of Palestine and the rains. For the most part the climate is an intensely dry one. For six months, viz., from the end of April to the beginning of November, there is, as a rule, no rain whatever. Very occasionally a shower will occur in summer, but this is quite abnormal. By the end of the summer the herbage is dried up, except in the rare cases where there are permanent streams or irrigation, and the leaves of the deciduous trees are falling, the only green in many places being that of the olive. The passing traveller who sees the shepherd leading his flock over the bare brown hillside or desert-like plain wonders how the sheep and goats can possibly exist.

The winter torrents have long since ceased to run, the shallower springs have become dry, and the permanent ones have shrunk to their lowest ebb. The rain-fed cisterns, the sole water-supply of many a village, have in numerous cases been drained to the last drop, and in the majority of those which are not exhausted the depth of water is measured by inches only. The *Shirocco*, or east winds from the Syrian desert, have swept with their scorching breath over the land. The heavy red loam, which constitutes so large a part of the arable soil of Palestine, is baked into strong clods which the feeble plough cannot break. Wild birds and animals have become bold in their thirst, and

HILLSIDE CLOSE TO JERUSALEM, SHOWING ROCKY NATURE OF GROUND.

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there is an intensity of longing for the rain, unknown in more-favoured lands. About the end of October or beginning of November, in favourable years, clouds begin to gather on the western horizon, especially at sunset. Distant lightning plays across the sky, and an occasional shower, chiefly at night, gives promise of what is to follow. After a few days the clouds gather more thickly, the roll of thunder is heard, and finally the windows of heaven seem to open, and torrents of rain descend. The Fellahîn have seen the storm coming, and all preparations have been made. The earthen roofs of the houses have been repaired, fresh soil having been scattered over them and rolled hard; the underground cisterns have been cleared out, and the channels leading to them put in order; oxen have been bought or trained; ploughs have been mended and goads put in order, or new ones procured; the earth round the fruit-trees has been hoed up; and in the plains faggots have been placed against the walls of the houses on the weather side, in exposed situations, and especially at the corners, that the rain may not wash away the mud of which they are composed.

As in olden days, there are still the former and the latter rains, and it is of the utmost importance for the crops that these should fall in their due season (Deut. xi. 14). There seems to be a good deal of confusion in some Western minds about these rains, due, probably, to the fact, often forgotten, that the Jewish year began at a different time to ours. The ecclesiastical new year com-

menced on the first of Nisan, which coincides, approximately, with our April, and the civil year in September. Consequently the former rains will be those which fall in our autumn—October, November, and December. This is what in normal years is the case. Then usually, from about the beginning of December, is a period of dry weather or but slight rainfall, while from the middle or end of January the latter rains may be said to commence, continuing at intervals to April, or occasionally even to May. These latter rains in ordinary years are much the more abundant of the two, this fact being probably the point of the passage Zech. x. 1.

In the Lebanon and on the maritime plain of Palestine the rains begin earlier than they do in the central hill region. The average rainfall of Palestine proper, as far as accurate observations have been made, is about 26 inches per annum, but in the Lebanon, and probably also in Northern Palestine, it is a good deal higher.

The most suitable time for the rains to commence is from the end of October to the end of November. Should they begin earlier, there is too long an interval between the former and the latter rains, and the corn sown then withers before these later ones are due. Should the season be very late, there is not time for the corn to fully develop before the rains finally cease and the hot weather sets in.

January is the coldest month, but there is popularly supposed to be always a spell of sharp weather about the end of February and the beginning of

March. The last four days of the former month and the three first of the latter are called the 'borrowed days,' from the following story: February, so it runs, having only twenty-eight days, goes to March, and says, 'Oh, my brother! lend me three days, and I will put four to them, and we will make it so cold that the old woman will break up her spinning-wheel to burn to keep herself warm.'

As the ploughing-time gets near, the Fellahîn may often be seen trying a newly-purchased yoke of oxen (St. Luke xiv. 19) on one of the small enclosed patches of ground near the village, or breaking in a young animal that has never before been under the yoke. In the latter case, an older one, accustomed to the work, is always yoked with the younger one, thus helping to teach it.

When the rains are near, or when only a small amount insufficient to saturate the soil has fallen, they sometimes plough over the ground simply to break it up. No seed, of course, is then sown, and the furrows are wider apart than when the regular ploughing takes place. Where ground is so treated the heavy autumnal showers soak in more thoroughly than when the smooth, sun-baked surface, trodden hard by the flocks and herds, is left in its natural state.

In some few cases ploughing and sowing can be done before the rains come. In places where the soil is light enough to allow of this, as, *e.g.*, in some parts of the Belka, east of the Jordan, I have seen considerable tracts sown before a drop of rain falls; such crops are called *'Afir*. This practice

has one advantage over that usually followed—viz., that crops so sown get the benefit of the whole of the rainfall, no small matter in a hot country where the cessation of the rain two or three weeks earlier or later may make all the difference between a good and a bad harvest. On the other hand, weeds are much more abundant than with the ordinary method, thus exhausting the soil and weakening the crop.

In the late spring severe thunderstorms occur now and then, accompanied with deluges of rain, which sometimes do immense harm. Some years ago one of these storms took place during the feast of Neby Mûsa. A party of Moslem pilgrims from a village about three hours north of Jerusalem was on its way to the shrine, their road being along the bottom of one of the numerous valleys which run down from the central ridge towards the Ghôr. Seeing the storm approaching, they all took refuge in a cave, and when it broke torrents of rain poured down the steep sides of the mountain in thousands of tiny streams, increasing in volume every moment; and as each gully and glen added its quota, the valley, which had been as dry as the desert, became filled with a raging flood, which swept everything before it with pitiless power. The water rose rapidly to the mouth of the cave, and the people in it, seeing their danger, sought to escape. A man took his two little boys, one under each arm, and tried to struggle through the torrent to the other side, but first one and then the other was swept from his grasp and drowned before his eyes; and of all the people, thirty or forty in number,

A FELLAH.

A SOWER.

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who had taken refuge in the cave, scarcely any remained to tell the tale. It is to such a torrent coming down the valley, like a wall of water, and sweeping all before it, that Solomon likens the oppression of the poor (Prov. xxviii. 3).

Should the rain be much delayed, and the crops be in danger of drying up, the children go about the villages beating drums, old tins, or anything else that will make a noise, shouting and singing in chorus the following words: 'Oh, Lord! rain—oh, Lord! a torrent; water Thy thirsty crops.' The idea in children doing this is that they are not so sinful as the older people, and that therefore God is more likely to hear their prayers. In the Jebel Ajlûn, on the other hand, in seasons of drought, they take an old woman, preferably the sheikh's wife, and putting her on a donkey, with her face to its tail, the women lead her round the village, singing and praying for rain.

When the rain has fallen in sufficient quantity, ploughing and sowing begin at once. The seed is sown, usually, on the unploughed land, the plough following immediately and turning it in with the soil. The share does not, however, turn *over* the soil as in the case of an English plough, but merely breaks it up from below, the seed falling in between the clods. Besides the cases where land is partially ploughed before sowing, as already mentioned, peasants who have plenty of oxen will occasionally break up land three times before sowing the seed, this latter operation taking place on the third ploughing, and where this is done the crop is said

to be always superior to that sown on land ploughed but once.

The ploughing is chiefly done by oxen, and the ordinary term for a yoke of oxen, *Feddân*, is used for the area which they will plough in a day. Although there are no hedges or walls to divide the different properties, the land is usually ploughed in small plots, a furrow, *Tilm*, of 30 or 40 yards being run on the ground, and others ploughed parallel to this, till a piece of that length and about half the breadth is finished; and then a second similar piece is ploughed next, and so on till the whole is completed. These plots are called *Ma'anâh*, and are usually one-third or one-fourth of a *Feddân*, and in some parts of the maritime plain this is used as a measure of land instead of the latter term. In the hill districts, on the terraced sides of the valleys and mountains, the shape and size of the piece ploughed at one time is determined by the dimensions of the terraces. Where two men's land adjoins each other, a double furrow is driven between the two plots, and piles of stones are set up at short intervals in this furrow. There is a reference to this practice in Hos. xii. 11, the idea there being that the altars of the idolatrous Israelites were as numerous as the boundary heaps in a wide stretch of arable land.

Although oxen are chiefly used to draw the plough, yet one not unfrequently sees oxen and asses yoked together, a practice forbidden to the Israelites (Deut. xxii. 10). The Fellahîn recognise the disparity of such a pair, and often contrive to

THRESHING CORN.

PLOUGHING.

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give the ox, as being the stronger animal of the two, the outside at corners, etc. In some places they use camels largely for this work, and occasionally a diminutive donkey may be seen attached to the same plough with a tall camel, forming as grotesquely ill-matched a pair as it is possible to imagine. Mules, horses, and in a few districts buffaloes, are also harnessed—the two former, singly, to a plough. It is *said* not to be unknown, either, for a poor man, who only owns a single ass, to harness his wife to make up the pair! Where the land is fairly level it is common for the people to plough in company (1 Kings xix. 19), and on the maritime plain, between Jaffa and Gaza, I have seen upwards of sixty ploughs at work at one time, in a comparatively small area.

One noticeable feature of the agriculture of Palestine is the Terraces—*Hibâl* (lit., ropes or cords)—to be found everywhere throughout the hill country, and attaining great perfection in the Lebanon. The sides of the hills and valleys are often very steep, and in order to prevent the earth being washed away by the heavy rains, as well as to facilitate cultivation, are carefully terraced. These terraces are formed by building low retaining walls of rough, undressed stone, without mortar, in lines parallel to the line of the valley, the earth being levelled up behind to the top of the wall. These terraces vary greatly in depth and width, the walls being often only a foot or eighteen inches in height, but sometimes, where there is a line of natural rock below on which the wall rests, 7 or 8 feet,

while occasionally they are much higher even than this.

The natural shelves of rock, which are very characteristic of the geological formation of much of Palestine, no doubt originally suggested these artificial terraces, which date from very ancient times, as is seen by the traces of them in remote parts of the country where there has been no cultivation for ages. In the districts where vine and fruit-trees are grown, the terraces add much to the beauty of the hillsides. A row of fig-trees, mulberries, etc., will often be seen planted near the outer edge, where the soil is deepest, and in the spaces between them and the wall of the terrace above vegetables will be grown, or the land will be ploughed, and corn, lentils, or other crops, sown there. Vines are commonly planted close to the outer wall, the branches being trained so that they hang down over it. In the early summer, when the vines are in their fresh green foliage, the picture, as one looks at such a terraced hillside from below, with cascade after cascade of brilliant verdure relieved by the darker hue of the olive and fig, the warm red-brown colour of the soil, and the gray of the stone walls peeping out here and there, is very beautiful.

Where there are no trees, as is commonly the case, the terraces look like a great staircase of irregular, uneven steps, ascending the hills. In places these terraces are very numerous, especially on the sides of the deeper valleys, and in the Lebanon I have counted between seventy and eighty of them one

SCENE OF JONATHAN'S EXPLOIT NEAR MICHMASH.

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above the other; and very likely in some parts there are more than even this number to be found on a single hillside.

When men are ploughing or engaged in any other field labour, they usually take off their outer cloak, or sheepskin coat, and throw it on the ground beside them. To this custom our Lord alludes in St. Matt. xxiv. 18. The assault of the enemy would be so sudden and unexpected, that he who would save his life must not even delay long enough to go back the few yards necessary to get his clothes. This would be true even to-day in Palestine when raids are made by robbers or Bedouin.

The wooden ploughs which are universally used, rude and primitive as they seem to a Western eye, are eminently suited to the work they have to perform, and are more complex than would appear at a hasty glance, having been probably evolved, by the teaching of experience, from a simpler form. The plough itself, apart from the yoke, consists of six main parts which, with slight variations of detail, are found everywhere throughout the country. The most important part is the elbow-shaped piece of wood (*Dthikr*)—No. 1 in the accompanying sketch. On this comes the main strain, and therefore it is, I believe, invariably a naturally curved piece of timber, as no conceivable joint would stand for long the severe work thrown on it. On the lower end of this fits the iron share (*Sikkeh*), No. 2, a term often applied to the whole plough, as in the saying, 'April's rain is worth the plough and

yoke of oxen.' A smaller, slightly curved piece of wood (*Râkûb*), No. 3, joins No. 1 with 4 (*Id* or *Yâd*), which is dovetailed into the former, and terminates in a cross-piece of wood (*Kabûseh*), No. 6, the two forming the handle by which the plough is lifted and guided. Into the upper end of No. 1 is secured a long pole (*Barak* or *'Oud*), No. 5, and to this a second tapering stick is fastened, usually by a couple of iron rings (*Wasl*), No. 8, which completes the implement, this latter pole being attached at its further end to the yoke, by means of an iron pin (*Jarûr*). The yoke (*Nîr*) consists of a long, stout piece of wood in which are four pegs (*Semnâneh*), No. 1, which go on either side of the necks of the oxen, and are secured by thongs or cords (*Shebâk*), No. 2, under their throats, one of each pair of cords having a loop at the end, and the other a wooden toggle (*Asfûreh*). These cords are often made of hair from the tails of cattle—hence the proverb, 'The ox's cord [which binds him to the yoke] is from its own tail.' It will be noticed how little iron is used in the construction of these ploughs, nails, even, being for the most part replaced by wooden pegs, and consequently there is probably more yielding of the whole when, as is so often the case in the hilly parts, it comes into sudden contact with a hidden rock or huge stone.

Spades are unknown in Palestine; a broad heart-shaped hoe is used instead in most parts of the country, and in the sandy districts of the maritime plain a similar instrument, but with a different blade, somewhat the shape of, and almost as large

as, an English spade, is ordinarily found. In the mountains, or anywhere where the soil is hard or stony, a rude kind of pick is employed—*e.g.*, as in breaking up the corners of a field where the plough cannot reach.

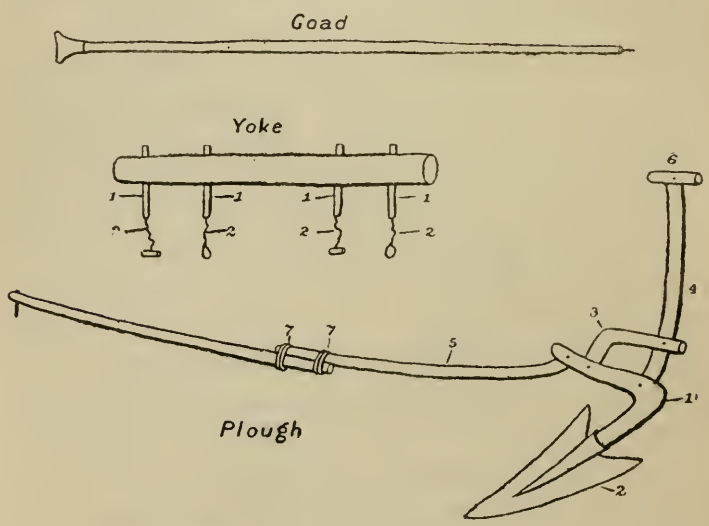
When the corn begins to grow, the weeds appear with it, and when the latter attain any size they are pulled up carefully, and carried away in bundles by the women, being used as fodder for the horses, cattle, and camels, a custom apparently referred to in Prov. xxvii. 25, R.V. In the Lebanon the coarser weeds, thistles, brambles, and such-like, are cut and dried, and then used for fuel for the bakers' ovens.

There is a considerable amount of irrigation in those parts of the country fortunate enough to possess permanent streams. More particularly is this the case in the Ghôr and the valleys running down into it, as the Zerka or Jabbok, Nimrîn, and Yarmuk, on the east, Jalud, Farah, and Aujeh, on the west, all of which have perennial brooks of considerable volume. In these wadies, and the level lands along their courses in the Jordan Valley, immense areas are ploughed and sown every year, and, being watered by these streams, are independent of the rains, producing luxuriant crops of grain even when the harvest is a failure everywhere else.

To come suddenly on one of these watered tracts after riding for hours, or perhaps days, over the scorched, verdureless plains, where not a blade of grass nor green leaf is to be seen, and note the abundance of life in all its tropical luxuriance

wherever the river comes, is as refreshing as it is striking.

In the neighbourhood of Beisan, where there are miles and miles of such irrigated lands, tall platforms are erected on poles among the growing wheat and barley, and on them are perched watchmen, as the grain develops, to scare away the wild birds and animals, keep the cattle from straying into the crops, and give warning of the attempts of robbers.



CHAPTER XI

AGRICULTURE (*continued*)

As might be supposed in a country where there is such a great variety of climate, the time of harvest differs much in the various parts. Thus, I have known the new barley (the earliest crop) on sale, from the neighbourhood of Gaza, in the middle of March; while, on the other hand, I have seen barley still growing on the higher parts of the Lebanon in August. In the neighbourhood of Jerusalem harvest operations are ordinarily in full swing by the end of April or the beginning of May.

When the corn is ripe, the whole family often goes out into the harvest-field. Men and women take part in the reaping; the elder children, boys and girls, drive the animals which carry the grain to the threshing-floors, and the younger children play about; while the babies are hung in a kind of bag to a tripod of sticks, or sheltered under a cloak thrown over the tripod.

The corn is cut by the reaper grasping a handful, some distance below the ears, with his left hand, and severing the stalks with a stroke of the sickle an inch or two above the ground. In many cases,

especially where the soil is shallow or stony, the grain is pulled bodily up by the roots. The corn is placed in small piles on the ground, and usually carried away at once to the threshing-floors. In the maritime plain I have seen low stacks of corn on the field. These are, however, only temporary, the reason of the corn being left thus being, probably, the abundance of the crop, and the lack of space on which to store it on the threshing-floors. It is usually carried on the backs of animals from the field to the threshing-floors, being cleverly tied in bundles in great quantities on the animal's back, or packed in nets, and thus can be conveyed great distances over rough ground without loss. At harvest-time a moving mass of corn may often be met coming along the narrow paths on the mountain-side. As these animated ricks approach, one can make out underneath each mass, and almost entirely concealed by it, a diminutive donkey, little of it being visible but its head and ears. The work is extremely severe, and in very hilly districts many donkeys are worked to death during harvest. The people themselves also toil very hard during the brief reaping-time. I have seen them busy in the fields at three o'clock in the morning, long before daybreak.

The harvest in the southern part of Palestine, especially in the plains about Gaza, is much earlier than in Central Palestine, and is also more abundant, being often more than the people of the village can reap in reasonable time. Consequently they are glad to get outside help, and many of the Fellahîn

from the hills go to the plains to help in getting in the wheat and barley. They generally receive as wages a certain quantity of cut corn, each day's amount being known as *Kirweh*. They beat out the grain, bringing it home at the end of the harvest, when it forms a welcome addition to the year's provision.

People will also not unfrequently help friends and neighbours to get in their harvest. Especially is this the case if one have finished before another, or if anything delays the threshing. Sometimes a dozen or more men and women may thus be seen in line reaping, and it is astonishing to note the rate at which they will clear the ground.

The very poor, who have no crops of their own, glean by the wayside and in the fields, and even sometimes, by permission of the owner, as Ruth did, among the sheaves (Ruth ii. 7, 15-17). When they have gleaned a quantity, they take it to some flat spot conveniently near and beat out the grain (Ruth ii. 17). The straw being of no use to them, they leave it there, and in going about the country at this season one often comes upon little heaps of straw by the wayside thus left there by the gleaners.

As the corn is brought in from the field it is piled up on the threshing-floors. These are open level spaces, in or around the villages as a rule, the floor being preferably rock, or, failing that, hard flat ground, and freely exposed to the wind. Here the corn is stacked up in great piles preparatory to threshing, and here the proprietor spreads his mattress at night, sleeping on the heap of straw or

beside the winnowed grain, to guard it against loss by thieves or fire. When all the crop has been thus brought in it is measured, to estimate the amount each farmer has to pay towards the total sum at which the village tithes are assessed, and no one is allowed to begin threshing till this is settled.

Some hill villages have land both in the hills and in the plains, the latter being often at a great distance from their homes. Where this is the case during the harvest in the plains (which, as already mentioned, is much earlier than that in the hills, the difference being from a month to six weeks, according to the greater or less difference in altitude), the greater part of the population of the village goes down to the low ground for the harvest and threshing, locking up their houses, and leaving only a few people to look after the place. When the harvest in the plain is secured, or that in the high ground is ripe, they return to their homes.

When all is ready for the threshing, and the requisite permission has been given, a mass of corn is piled up in a circular heap in the centre of the floor. This heap, called in some places *'Aram*, is from 20 to 30 feet in diameter, and about 3 feet deep. Several head of cattle, with perhaps one or two donkeys, fastened together by their headstalls, are driven round and round on this pile till the grain is fully separated from the straw and the latter is broken up. When the string of animals has been going round and round in one direction for about ten minutes, it is stopped and made to face about, the animal on the outside now taking the

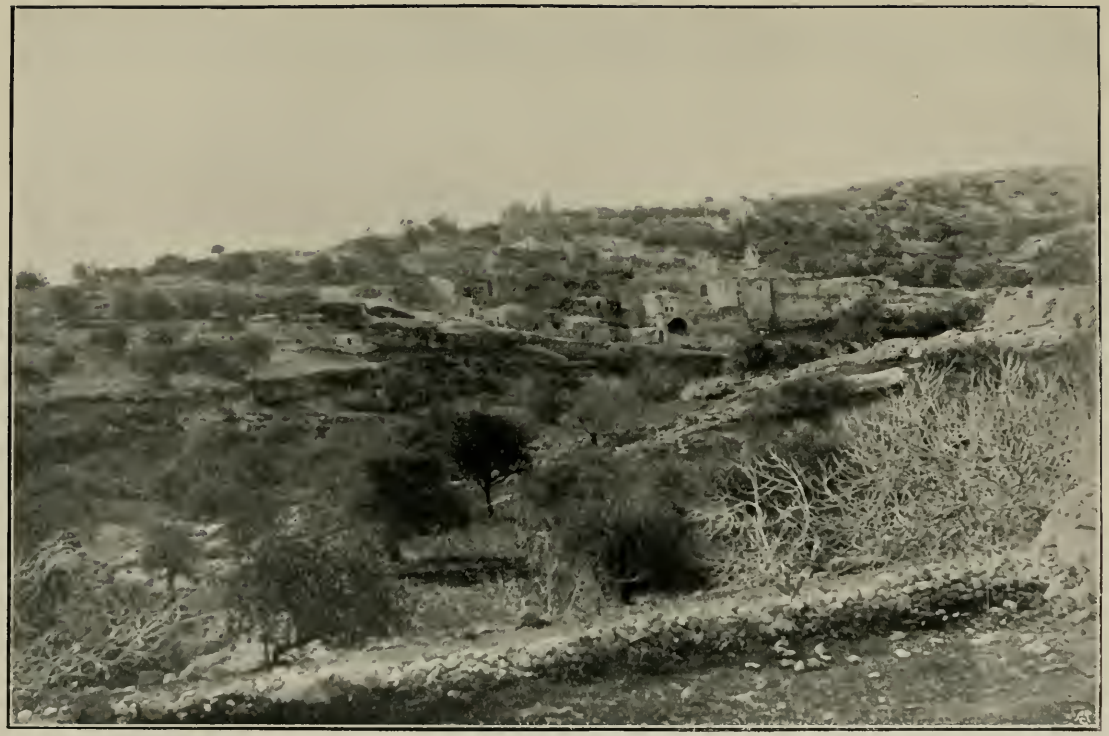
inside, and proceeding in the reverse direction for another ten minutes, when a change is made back to the original order and direction. This is continually repeated as long as the animals remain at work. As this treading process goes on, the separated grain, being the heavier part, falls to the bottom, the straw which remains at the top becoming gradually broken up and bruised, till it somewhat resembles the chaff used for feeding horses and other animals in England. The whole heap is turned over now and then, and in from a day and a half to two days the process is complete.

For this work the oxen are generally shod with iron, and, just before the threshing begins, men whose special business this is come round to the different villages and shoe the oxen at so much a head. As soon as the Fellâh judges that the straw is sufficiently crushed, he proceeds to separate it from the grain. The greater part of this straw, lying at the top of this heap, is easily removed by hand; but much still remains mixed with the grain, and in order to separate this, as soon as the breeze, which at this time of year usually blows from noon onwards, gets up, he takes a wooden fork (*Mithrâ*) having five flat prongs, and with it throws up the mixture of grain and straw several feet into the air. The corn falls back nearly on the same spot, but the straw is carried a longer or shorter distance according to the strength of the breeze (Ps. i. 4; Isa. xvii. 13).

This straw is divided into two parts; the finer and softer parts (*Tibn*) are used as fodder for horses

and cattle. This Tibn is a very important product of the crop, as it takes the place of hay, which is unknown in Palestine, for feeding horses, etc. The length of the stalk of the corn depends largely on the amount of rain which has fallen during the growth of the plant. *Cæteris paribus*, the stalk is always shorter than in England; and in years of little rainfall the yield of Tibn is consequently very deficient, and the cattle suffer considerably as a result. Tibn from barley is the best for fodder, that from wheat being harsher and less nourishing. The coarsest part, consisting of the joints, lower parts of the stems and roots, called *Kashû*, is used by the Fellahîn for heating their ovens, and about Gaza the potters buy it to burn in the kilns.

The method of treading out the corn just described is that most commonly adopted, but in many places, instead of doing this by the feet of cattle, an instrument called *Nowraj* is employed for the purpose. This consists of a large thick plank of wood, turned up in front, and hewn out of a solid piece of timber. A number of holes are drilled in the under side, and into these are fixed pointed pieces of basalt or flint, projecting half or three-quarters of an inch (Isa. xli. 15). The corn is put in a heap, as described above, and this board, drawn by a pair of oxen or a single horse or mule, is driven round and round on it, the driver standing on it to give it additional weight, and so make it more effective. The corn is separated and the straw cut up rather more quickly by this method than by the other, but I do not think that the



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resultant straw for fodder, the Tibn, is of so good a quality.

The grain, after being separated from the straw and chaff, is cleaned from earth, etc., by sifting in a sieve, and then piled up in a heap on the floor. This heap is known as *Salîbeh*, from the word for a cross, as the Christians, and many Moslems also, make the mark of a cross on it with the handle of the winnowing fork, for good luck, sticking the fork afterwards in the middle of the heap, prongs upwards. The grain is then stored away in the corn-bins in the houses or in sacks; the Tibn also is stored for future use.

In the hill districts, in a few villages the cattle treading out the corn are muzzled, though in most places this is not the case, and they are allowed, as they tramp their weary round, to eat as much as they please (Deut. xxv. 4; 1 Cor. ix. 9). The muzzle where used is of two kinds, the simpler being a ring made of a twig of mulberry or willow placed round the mouth of the animal, and kept in its place by two strings, one on each side, fastened to its horns; the other kind consists of a sort of wicker basket covering the mouth and nose, and secured in the same way as the other to the horns.

During the time that the corn is being trodden out by the cattle they require much water, as they are working hard for many hours in the hot sun; and in some places two or three men are specially hired for the purpose of drawing water for the oxen and asses to drink, receiving as wages a certain quantity of corn per head.

Before storing the corn it is measured, which is done in the following manner: The man who does it squats down on the ground beside the heap of corn, with the measure between his legs; then, filling the measure about three-quarters full, he gives it a vigorous shake with a rotatory motion, making the grain settle closely down; next, filling it to the top, he gives it another shake, and then proceeds to press the corn down with both hands, using all his strength in doing so. This done, he piles up a conical mound of wheat or barley, gently patting it the while to press it together, and from time to time making a small hollow at the top, into which he pours the corn till it can literally not hold a grain more. This is the way corn is always measured, and to give less than this would not be good or full measure; it is to this universal custom that our Lord's words (St. Luke vi. 38) refer. To measure thus is called *'Arram*, one of their common proverbs being suggested by it—'*'Arrim lî wa û'arrim lak*' (Give me full measure, and I will give you full measure).

In counting the measures, the man who is doing it continues calling out the number of the previous one while filling the next. Many Mohammedans, when measuring, say for the first one, 'God is One,' and for the next, 'He has no second,' then simply 'Three,' 'Four,' and so on. There are several unlucky numbers, the first being five, and therefore, instead of saying the number, they often say 'Your hand,' five being the number of the fingers; seven is another unlucky number, strange to say, and is

passed over in silence, or the word 'A blessing' is used instead; at nine Moslems often say, 'Pray in the name of Mohammed'; eleven also is not unfrequently omitted, the measurer saying, 'There are ten,' and then passing on to twelve.

The *Kal*, or standard measure of corn, varies greatly in different parts of the country. In some places the *Sâa* is the unit, in others the *Midd*. Again, even where the same name is given to the measure in different places, the capacity is not the same: thus, the Jerusalem *Sâa* is not the same as the Nablus one; while in some places there are two measures of the same name, being distinguished as 'the measure' and 'the large measure.'

When the Fellahîn take their grain to town to sell it, a professional measurer is sometimes called in, who receives (in Jerusalem) half a piastre—about one penny—for each *Sâa*. There is a Government standard measure, but in the villages, especially in the more remote districts, the people do not trouble themselves about such things. On one occasion, when travelling east of the Jordan, I saw a man riding along with a corn-measure hung from his saddle-bow, and on being asked why he carried it with him, his reply was that some months before he had purchased corn from two men in a village near, the terms being that at harvest he was to repay a certain number of measures of grain, the men stipulating that the same measuring vessel should be used as on the former occasion, and he was now on his way to pay his debt.

The principal crops are those already mentioned

—viz., wheat and barley—but there are many others beside them. Lentils and a species of vetch, the seeds of which are used for feeding cattle, are widely grown, and are the earliest of all crops. Two other important crops are millet—the white variety, which is very largely grown in the maritime plain, Jordan Valley, and other parts where the soil is deep enough and sufficiently rich—and sesame (*Sesamum orientale*). This latter, which is familiar enough by name to readers of the 'Arabian Nights,' is not, as frequently supposed, a grain, but the seed of a slender, branched herbaceous plant, 18 inches to 2 feet in height, with pale pink bell-shaped flowers, a little like those of our common foxglove, which are succeeded by long, narrow pods containing a number of brown seeds. When fully ripe these pods open at a mere touch, so that the Fellahîn cut the sesame before it is quite ripe, stacking it usually on the roofs of the houses till fit for threshing, when the seeds are beaten out with a stick. These seeds contain a large quantity of oil, which is used in cooking as a substitute for olive-oil and animal fats; the residue after the oil is expressed is used for feeding goats and sheep, which devour it greedily. The entire seeds are used in some sweetmeats, and are scattered on cakes. Both millet and sesame are sown in the late spring, and are called 'summer crops.'

In the plains large quantities of water-melons are grown, especially in the sandy soil about Ramleh and Lydd, and are sent all over the country. As the melons begin to ripen, little booths, consisting

of four upright poles, with a light roof as a shelter from the sun, are erected in each patch, and here a keeper or watchman lives for weeks guarding the crop.

Tobacco is also cultivated to a considerable extent, but, as it is a Government monopoly, managed by a syndicate, it can only be grown by permission of the authorities, who, on the application of the villagers of any place, allow a certain area to be planted, buying the crop when ripe. It is very remunerative, and so various attempts, and often successful ones, are made to outwit the authorities, and to grow much larger quantities than those allowed.

Not long ago information was sent to the local representatives of this syndicate in a certain district, about the time that the plants were ripe, that a village which had obtained a concession for growing tobacco had a much larger area sown with it than was allowed by the permit. Shortly after this an official of the syndicate, accompanied by several mounted *gens d'armes*, arrived one evening at the village. The elders of the place, who knew very well why they had come, received them most cordially; they were conducted to the guest-house, and after a while an excellent meal was put before them. Supper over, their hosts entertained them with interesting conversation, and after a time they retired to rest well pleased with their reception. When the visitors were safely asleep, the entire population of the village turned out, and long ere dawn the whole of the extra crop of tobacco had

been harvested in excellent condition, and not a trace left on the plots where it had been sown, to show that there had been tobacco there within the memory of man. Next morning the official politely intimated to the sheikh the object of his visit, and was assured with equal courtesy that every facility would be given him to inspect the crop. This he proceeded to do, when it was found that the precise area mentioned in the official permission was planted, neither more nor less. The man returned home, and no doubt reported to his chief that the people of this village were a most gentlemanly set of men, and that the report about the extra tobacco crop was a malicious invention.

They do not, however, always get the best of such attempts. I was once staying for a couple of days at a Moslem village whose inhabitants had been refused permission to grow tobacco that year. A rumour, however, had reached the authorities that, notwithstanding this refusal, the people were growing it as usual, and a man was sent to investigate. A hint that he was coming had been conveyed to the villagers, and when he appeared on the scene not a trace of a tobacco-plant was visible in the little patches of land in and around the village where it is usually grown. The official, his wits quickened by experience, suspected certain plots whose surface was somewhat uneven, though no one not trained to the work would have thought this unevenness more than natural. Sending for a hoe, he quickly laid

bare row after row of thriving tobacco-plants, so artfully and carefully covered over with earth as completely to conceal, and yet leave uninjured, the precious crop. A few minutes' vigorous work with his hoe, however, put an end for that year to the villagers' hopes of a tobacco harvest.

The people of some of the villages near the Ghôr are often partners with the Bedouin there. The latter have much irrigated land, more than they need to supply their wants, and being more indolent than the Fellahîn, they get them to assist in the cultivation of their land, the Fellahîn taking their own cattle and ploughs, and receiving one-fourth of the produce as payment. From one village north of Jerusalem a number of people go every year to the Belka, to assist the people of Madeba in ploughing, as the lands of that village are so extensive that they have not men or cattle enough of their own to get the work done in the comparatively short season. In return for this help they receive one-fifth of the produce, the owners of the land bearing all the expenses and finding the seed.

In the case of friendly help from neighbours, the Fellâh, on the conclusion of the threshing, makes a feast to which he invites all who have given him any assistance in getting in his crops; this feast is called *Jurah*.

In addition to the crops already mentioned, peas and beans of various kinds, onions, garlic, tomatoes, carrots, turnips, beetroot, maize, cucumbers, sweet-melons, gourds, egg-plant, cauliflowers, cabbages,

etc., are grown. In fields of cucumber and other vegetables, the booths already mentioned under the account of the melon-fields are often to be found. These booths or sheds are frequently referred to in the Old Testament (Job xxvii. 18, xxiv. 20; Lam. ii. 6; Jonah iv. 5), and are very common now. They vary greatly in size and durability. Some are of the flimsiest description, and can be put up and taken down in a few minutes, which is doubtless the point of the allusion in Job xxvii. 18. They consist of a few leafy boughs, supported on four sticks, as a slight shelter from the sun. Some are much more substantial and roomy. Indeed it is not uncommon for a whole family to live in one of these booths, in their vineyards, throughout the summer, especially where the vineyard is at a great distance from the village, and where the grapes are to be chiefly made into raisins. Occasionally a broad-leaved gourd is trained over the booth to give additional shade (Jonah iv. 6).

In such a dry climate as Palestine, every spring, however small, is utilized to the utmost for irrigating gardens of fruit-trees and vegetables, and water rights are therefore very valuable. As the springs for the most part come out on the sides of the valleys, it is easy to water a series of terraces, at different levels, from the same source, the little rivulet sometimes reaching a long distance down the valley before it is finally absorbed. At times the traveller will come suddenly on a deep glen whose brilliant green gardens and

fruit-laden trees form a striking contrast to the bare hillsides around. Descending into the valley, he will find issuing from a mass of fallen rocks, gray with the storms of centuries, a little thread of water, clear and cool, which runs into a large open cistern hewn in the solid rock, or built on the side of a natural terrace, and carefully cemented all round the inside. Here, from the neighbouring village, come at morning and evening troops of laughing girls or careworn women, with their pitchers on their heads, to draw water. Here, too, in the heat of the day, come the shepherds with their thirsty flocks, the goats and sheep patiently standing waiting their turn to come, at the shepherd's bidding, and slake their thirst, or lying quietly chewing the cud in the shade of the overhanging rocks or under the shadow of a leafy tree. In the larger cisterns the boys of the hamlet at evening dive and swim, shouting and splashing and enjoying the fun like any English lads. The cistern has a hole in the outer wall, close to the bottom, for the purpose of drawing off the water when required. From here the little stream flows by a series of channels into the level terraces of garden ground, these terraces being subdivided by little furrows into rectangular plots at a slightly lower level than that of the bed of the furrow, so that, when a breach is made in the little low bank of the latter, the water flows into the depressed area till it is full, when the gardener with his foot or hoe scrapes the earth into the breach, and the tiny rivulet flows on to another plot.

It was these regular plots of garden ground, with their intersecting water-channels, which the ordered fifties and hundreds, seated on the green grass at the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, suggested to the mind of St. Mark, and which the πρασιαὶ πρασιαὶ (chap. vi. 39) so graphically describes. The gay appearance of the multitudes recalling (as some writers have thought) the bright flower-beds of a garden is an idea which would never occur to an Oriental, as in the East flowers are not thus grown. This method of irrigating is the watering with the foot (Deut. xi. 10), so characteristic of the husbandry of Egypt, though not by any means confined to that land.

In the maritime plain, especially in the orange-gardens in the neighbourhood of Jaffa, irrigation is carried on from large wells, 60 to 100 feet in depth, from which water is pumped by means of an endless chain of earthenware jars or wooden buckets, passing over a wooden wheel, and dipping into the water at the bottom. This wheel is on a horizontal shaft which carries a second and larger wheel, and rests on masonry pillars 10 and 12 feet high. This second wheel really consists of two, side by side, about a foot apart, and connected at their rims by a large number of bars of wood driven through both at short intervals, thus forming rude cogs. Into these work a number of pegs fixed in the rim of another smaller wheel which is fastened to a vertical shaft, and revolves horizontally just below the larger one, being turned by a horse, mule, or camel. The buckets or jars, as

SAKÎYEH.

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they turn over, discharge their contents into a large cistern, the bottom of which is at a somewhat higher level than the surface of the ground, and from which a number of cemented conduits or channels conduct the water to every part of the garden. The whole apparatus is clumsy in the extreme, and there is, needless to say, great waste of power, but the creaking, groaning *Sakiyeh* is a great feature of the level plains of Palestine.

Yet another means of irrigation from shallow wells, pools, and rivers, is the *Shadûf*, a long rod swinging between two uprights by means of an iron bar, which passes through a hole in it about a third of its length from the bottom, to which a heavy stone is attached in order to balance the weight of the water in the bucket, which is fastened by a rope to the upper end. This *Shadûf*, which is so characteristic of Egypt, is but rarely seen in Palestine.

The lack of water is, perhaps, the greatest physical defect of the Holy Land at the present time, and this has been greatly aggravated by the cutting down of the forest trees. Indeed, it may be said that one of the greatest needs of the land at the present time, from the point of view of the agriculturist, is trees, as its reafforestation would largely increase the volume of the springs, enabling much more ground to be irrigated, and so rendering the people less dependent on the immediate amount of rain for their crops.

At the time of the conquest of Canaan under Joshua, large tracts of country were covered with

dense forest (Josh. xvii. 15, 18), and though, no doubt, much of this was cleared by the Israelites, yet a considerable area at subsequent periods seems to have reverted to forest. Even now, here and there, in remote valleys and glens, one comes upon patches of woodland which look like relics of former forests, and in certain districts such as Carmel, the Jebel Ajlûn (Gilead), Tabor, and some of the valleys to the north-west, west, and south-west of Hebron, considerable areas are yet covered with scrub of oak, terebinth, oleaster, arbutus, locust-tree, etc. This scrub, if protected, would soon develop into fine timber trees, but charcoal-burners, lime-burners, and others, are allowed to cut it in the most reckless fashion, without let or hindrance.

The goats and sheep which are taken to these tracts to graze are also responsible for much damage, more especially the goats, as they are fond of browsing on the young shoots of the shrubs. Bush fires do a great deal of harm. The charcoal-burners, when cutting the thicker branches, trim off the smaller twigs on the spot, to save trouble; these drop among the shrubs and soon wither, and become very dry; a chance light sets the whole in a blaze, and acres at a time are thus destroyed.

On Carmel and in the oak-woods in the hill country east of the Jordan, the same wanton destruction of trees is caused by the custom, mentioned elsewhere, of the shepherds cutting down branches from the trees for their flocks. The branches lie where they fall, consequently in a few years a tree will be surrounded by a pile of brushwood as dry

as tinder, and when a light is applied it burns like gunpowder; I have seen many trees, which took centuries to reach their present size, killed in an hour in this reckless fashion.

But what leads to even more regular and systematic destruction of the small amount of remaining forest trees than these causes is the increasing demand for firewood. As the European population grows, and as the natives adopt more widely Western habits and luxuries, there is a larger demand every year for fuel; and as the supply grows less, not only are the *trees* cut down, but the very *roots* are grubbed up, so that, if the present system is allowed to continue, the little wood that is left will soon have entirely disappeared. The steam flour-mills are the greatest offenders in the matter, as one such mill will, in the course of a year, consume more than hundreds of houses. Many olive-trees, too, are felled every year for the same purpose. The poorer peasants have often nothing else saleable; money they must have to meet the Government demands, and, suicidal though the policy be, as they themselves will often admit, yet, as they truly say: 'What can we do? We must have money to pay the Government, and we have nothing else to sell?'

Next to drought, the Fellahîn have most to fear from locusts. These pests appear from time to time, and occasionally work terrible havoc, utterly destroying the crops, devouring the leaves of the trees, and even eating the bark of the twigs and smaller branches. The most fertile districts when

invaded by a swarm are left as bare as the desert. It is many years since a really bad visitation of locusts occurred in Palestine, and then they came two years in succession, ravaging the country from end to end. The Fellahîn were then much better off than they are now, and the supplies of corn. dried figs, etc., were sufficient to carry them through this period without much suffering; but were such a calamity to befall the country now, it would mean almost certain starvation to the larger number of them. The year after the locusts the land brought forth in extraordinary abundance, and men say that they never saw such magnificent crops as those of that year.

But though it is long since the whole country has suffered from them, local visitations are by no means uncommon, and do not always injure the crops. I remember one such swarm in the Belka in the month of July. The harvest had long been reaped. and as there were no vineyards or oliveyards in that part of the country, and the dry straw on the threshing-floors was too hard for them to eat, they could do no harm. This species was a small one and covered the ground in all directions, rising up in clouds under one's horse's feet, while the effect of the sun on their light gauzy wings, as they were borne along by the breeze, was that of a fall of living snow.

But it is in the larval and not in the adult stage that most damage is done by this scourge, and what the Fellahîn specially dread is the arrival of a swarm in the spring-time, while the ground is soft, so that in it their eggs are laid, to emerge a year later in

a countless host of wingless larvæ, each one of which devours thrice its own weight of food in twenty-four hours. The extraordinary fecundity of this insect is described in a curious Arabic proverb which runs, 'The locust laid a hundred eggs, and remarked, "What a very small family!"' When, however, the soil is hard, the eggs remain on the surface and are devoured by birds, or are swept away by the heavy autumnal rains. They are then also easily collected by hand, and during a recent invasion of locusts, east of the Jordan, the local authorities ordered each person in the district to bring in a certain weight of the eggs, which were then destroyed. The locust has natural enemies also, which destroy vast quantities. A few years ago, crossing the Plain of Jezreel, I saw millions of locusts among the millet (which was just in ear), and scattered over the plain was an army of storks, eagerly devouring them. Coming back a few days later, over the same line of country, not a locust or a stork was to be seen.

The local Government usually bestirs itself if there be any real threatening of this plague. A few years ago a large swarm appeared near Jericho, and all the available soldiers, with large quantities of petroleum, were sent from Jerusalem to destroy them, and numbers of men and boys were requisitioned from every village in the district to aid in the work of destruction, with the result that, assisted by a flock of storks which followed the swarm, the locusts were practically annihilated and the danger averted.

CHAPTER XII

AGRICULTURE (*continued*)

PALESTINE is a country specially suited to the cultivation of fruit. Of fruit-bearing trees the olive is *facile princeps* in value and importance. Indeed, the olive crop is, at least at the present day, of more real importance than either of the grain crops, wheat and barley. It is a highly remunerative one, and on it the Fellahîn largely depend to get the money for the payment of their taxes, and other expenses for which actual cash is required, and so a failure of the olive crop is a more serious matter than a failure of the harvest.

The olive abounds in Palestine to-day, as it has done, in all probability, from the very earliest days, and forms one of the characteristic features of its scenery; and though to a Western eye there is a stiffness and monotony about a grove of olive-trees, yet their gnarled trunks and silvery-gray foliage, contrasted with the rich brownish-red of the soil, have a peculiar charm of their own. It has been cultivated in remote ages; the Israelites were familiar with olive-oil before they had settled in the land of Canaan (*cf.* Exod. xxvii. 20, xxx. 24, etc.),

AN OLIVE GROVE.

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and both the tree and oil are frequently mentioned in the Old Testament.

It is propagated both by seed and cuttings, but most commonly by the latter method. The olive has the property of sending up shoots from its roots at a short distance from the trunk, these shoots developing in time into young trees. One or more of them may be seen growing near most old olives, and when the Fellahîn wish for young trees they dig up these shoots, detaching a certain amount of root with them, and plant them out wherever the new tree is desired. This should be done in the autumn after the first rains have fallen; and where a due amount of the root has been detached with it, and a sufficient amount of rain or water is obtained for the first six months, the young tree almost invariably lives and takes root, and in a few years becomes a vigorous fruit-bearing tree.

In some cases two or more of these shoots may be found growing round one tree; indeed, I have seen as many as five or six of the scions springing from the roots of one old olive, and this is undoubtedly the figure in Ps. cxxviii. 3, the sons and daughters growing up around the father being likened to these young olive-trees springing up round the parent stem, to be in their turn transplanted, and to become the centres of other groups of trees. I have heard a statement made by a resident in the East, that the spreading base of the olive-tree, where it joins the ground, is called the 'table' of the olive, and that this suggested the figure to the Psalmist. I have never myself been

able to find such a use of the word, or to meet with any native who had heard of it; still, it is quite possible that such an expression is current in certain localities, as many words and phrases are confined to very limited areas, and it is never safe to conclude, from one's knowledge of even a wide extent of country, that words and expressions not known there are universally unknown.

All olive-trees, whether grown from seeds or shoots, even if taken from good trees, must be grafted, or the produce is of no value. To graft a young tree, a vigorous branch is selected, and near the base, where it joins the main trunk, a longitudinal incision is made through the bark, which is carefully raised on either side of the cut, without, however, detaching the bark from the tree. A graft is prepared by taking a healthy twig growing out of a similar branch on a good tree, and cutting out this twig with a rectangular piece of the bark attached to it, about 2 inches square, the twig being in the centre. This is then inserted in the incision made in the wild tree, and under the raised bark, which is then bound tightly down on the graft. The whole is then left for a year or so, when, if the graft has taken proper hold, the rest of the bough immediately beyond it is sawn off, in order that all the nourishment may go into the twig which has been grafted on.

The olive blossoms in the late spring, and the fruit takes about six months to mature. The flower is very small and cream-coloured, and grows thickly for two or three inches along all the outer

twigs, so that a tree in full blossom is a beautiful mass of creamy colour. But a small proportion of the flowers 'set' or 'knot,' to translate literally the Arabic term; but even so the olive is very prolific, and the weight of fruit which a well-grown tree will produce, under favourable circumstances, is enormous. The crop, however, runs a good many risks; heavy rain at the time of blossoming will often knock off the blossom, or a spell of very hot weather will dry it up and make it fall without setting. Should neither of these misfortunes befall it, an insufficient rainfall in the previous winter will cause the fruit to be small and poor; or should there be much or strong *Shirocco* in the autumn, when the olives are approaching maturity, it will shrivel them up and cause them to drop off. This 'shirocco' is a scorching east wind, the word 'shirocco' being a corruption of the Arabic word *shirkîyeh*, the feminine form of the word for east (the noun 'wind' being feminine in that language). It is also called occasionally *Simûm*, or 'poisonous.' Coming across the Great Syrian Desert, it is intensely dry, and, except in winter, hot. It scorches vegetation, especially in exposed situations, often turning the leaves brown, as though frost-bitten. Men and animals suffer considerably from fatigue and exhaustion while it continues, its injurious effects on the animal system being attributed to the absence of ozone.

When the shirocco is very strong, the air is filled with fine dust, and the whole atmosphere becomes murky and most oppressive. In Egypt it is known

as *Khamsin*, or 'fifty,' from its occurring at intervals during a period of about fifty days in the spring. In Palestine this shirocco blows chiefly in the spring and autumn, April and May, and September and October, being the months when it is most frequent; and it lasts generally for three, six, or nine days at a time, but may continue longer. It also blows occasionally in the winter, and is then intensely cold. This wind is probably referred to several times in the Old Testament, as, *e.g.*, in the LXX. version of Isa. xlix. 10; Ezek. xvii. 10; Hos. xiii. 15; Jonah iv. 8.

The olive is a slow-growing tree, and continues to bear for centuries. The fruit is gathered in the autumn, and it is a busy time when a village has many trees or the crop is a large one. In the case of one large grove near Sidon, said to be the largest in Syria, the people are not allowed to go and gather the crop till a time appointed by the local authorities, in order to prevent persons stealing surreptitiously from their neighbour's trees. On the day fixed, all the inhabitants of the villages which have trees there go down and work continuously till the olives are all gathered. The fruit is gathered before ripening, as many prefer it for eating while still green. For making oil, however, the fruit must be left to ripen.

To prepare the green olives for eating, they are usually broken slightly first, and then soaked for a while in water to remove some of the bitterness, after which they are pickled in salt and water, with a little oil, and sometimes a slice or two of lemon.

The ripe olives are pickled whole without the preliminary soaking. The best oil of all is obtained from fruit which falls of itself from the tree, but owing partly to poverty, partly to fear of theft, and partly to improvidence, the olives are rarely thus left. The gathering is done by beating the trees with long rods (Deut. xxiv. 20; Isa. xxvii. 12, R.V.). In the Gaza district they use a long stick with a short one tied to it, like an old-fashioned English flail, but elsewhere I have only seen the single stick employed.

The olives having been gathered, those that are intended to be used for oil are taken to the press, usually without any preparation; but in the Jebel Ajlûn (Gilead) they are stewed over the fire in a jar, either without water or with only a very small amount; they are then spread on the house-top to dry, after which they are ready to be crushed. This operation is carried out by means of a huge stone, in shape like a large grindstone, the principle being that of the familiar mortar-mill used by builders, except that in place of the revolving-pan there is a solid circular block of stone on which the grinding, or rather crushing, stone runs. The details of the *Badd*, as it is called, differ somewhat in different parts of the country, but the principle is the same. The revolving stone is moved by a horse or mule generally, but sometimes by a camel, and even by men, by means of a beam of wood passing through a hole in the centre of the stone, and kept in place by being fastened to a vertical beam which turns on a pivot in the lower stone.

After being crushed, the olives are sometimes put in jars, and left for two or three days before being pressed, but more commonly this is done at once. The black pasty mass is put in baskets made of a tough grass which grows by streams, or wrapped in hair-cloth similar to that used for the tents of the shepherds, and a number of these baskets or bags are placed one above another in the press, and pressure applied. The native wooden machine consists of a huge beam secured at one end to a wall by a rude hinge, while a great wooden screw passes through the other end for the purpose of raising and lowering it. The baskets are piled up under the lever on a stone slab, with gutters leading into a stone trough; pressure is applied to the further end of the beam, and the oil flows in streams into the receptacle made to receive it. The method is a very primitive one, and much oil is lost by the process. In some cases screw, and even hydraulic, presses have been introduced from Europe, yielding a much larger percentage of oil. When expressed it is put in goatskins or jars, in which it is taken into the towns for sale. It is largely employed in soap-making as well as in cooking. Its price varies greatly from year to year, according to the quantity in the market; but taking it altogether, it is by far the most valuable product of the country.

Vines are cultivated throughout the land, both soil and climate being peculiarly suitable for them. There are many varieties, which are made use of in different ways, some being used only for eating,

others for wine-making; some are employed in making a kind of molasses, and others, again, are made into raisins.

The vines need a great deal of attention if they are to be really productive. The whole vineyard must be ploughed at least once a year, or the vines rapidly degenerate, and carefully pruned, or else there will be little or no fruit; while during the grape season they must be constantly watched to prevent the grapes being stolen.

In some districts there are very large areas under vines, as, *e.g.*, about Hebron, Es Salt, and some parts of the Lebanon. In the hill country they blossom about the end of May or beginning of June; and riding through these districts at that time of the year, in the early morning, especially if there be a northerly breeze (Cant. iv. 16), the air is filled with the delicate and refreshing perfume from the long clusters of minute yellow-green flowers.

In a few places the vines are supported on stakes, somewhat as one sees them grown on the continent of Europe; but usually they are allowed to trail on the ground, the Fellahîn holding that they are thus less injured by the hail-storms, which occur about the end of the rainy season, and which sometimes destroy much of the blossom.

Vineyards are almost invariably enclosed by a wall (*Jedar*) built of rough stone without mortar, the materials being found on the spot, as the stone used is generally that got out of the soil in preparing it for the vines. These walls are often in a much dilapidated condition. Frequently very

loosely built, a dog or fox in its efforts to scale them will sometimes bring a piece down with a run (see Tobiah's taunt, Neh. iv. 3); and as they are merely built on the surface of the ground, without foundations, the heavy rains in winter often wash the soil from under them, or so soften it that it yields to their weight, and much of the wall falls.

When the grapes begin to enlarge as the vintage draws on, the walls are repaired, and very often a row of small bushes of the *Netsh*—a low thorny bush, a species of burnet—is laid along the top of the walls, projecting a few inches beyond it, and kept in place by stones, this being done in order to prevent the dogs, foxes, and jackals, all of whom are very fond of grapes, from getting over the walls into the vineyards, and stealing the fruit. Sometimes a path runs between the vineyards, having on either side one of these rough stone walls. These paths are usually very narrow and winding, so that it is difficult for two animals to pass each other, especially if either of them is laden. It was in such a path (which the Arabic version of the Old Testament graphically renders 'ditch') that Balaam met the angel of the Lord (Num. xxii. 24).

Besides these walls, most vineyards have a tower (St. Matt. xxi. 33), built, like the walls, of rough stone without mortar. In many instances the vineyards extend to great distances from the villages, occasionally as much as four or five miles, so that during the grape harvest the owner takes his whole family out there, and lives for several

months in this tower, guarding the place and drying the fruit.

Some of the towers, especially in the more distant and lonely vineyards, are of considerable strength, so as to be veritable places of safety. Nor is this uncalled for: thieves are common, and fatal affrays with them are by no means unknown. In the autumn of 1897 a notorious thief was shot dead in a lonely vineyard belonging to the village of Ain Arik, by a man whom he attacked in order to rob him of his scanty crop.

Besides human thieves, the foxes, jackals, bears, and half-wild village dogs, as already mentioned, are fond of grapes, and make raids on the vineyards when the fruit is ripe, while other and more formidable wild beasts, such as wolves, have to be guarded against. These stronger towers are built in two stories of a single room each. The access to the upper one is through the lower, this latter being entered by a low doorway from the vineyard. Some rough steps lead up to the higher chamber, and a slab of stone is placed over them at night, one of the family spreading his bed on it, so that it is impossible for anyone to enter unobserved. The walls of this upper room are only about 4 feet high, and in lieu of a roof a kind of arbour is formed, supported on sticks, to give protection from the sun and heavy autumnal dews, a vine being sometimes trained over to give additional shade.

Large quantities of grapes are made into raisins in certain districts, those of Hebron and Es Salt being considered the best. There are several

qualities, the best being called *Banât esh Shâm*, or 'Daughters of Damascus.' That city being famous for its gardens, its name has come to be applied in Palestine and Syria to the superior sorts of fruit.

To make the raisins, the grapes, after being gathered, are dipped into a lye made from the ashes of the evergreen oak or terebinth, both hard woods, the lye from the ashes of soft wood not being considered so good. The lye is contained in a wide shallow vessel, and the grapes, in a wicker basket, are plunged into it for a short time; the basket is then withdrawn, and placed over a similar but smaller vessel to drain. The grapes, still in the bunch, are then spread out on a smooth, open piece of ground in the vineyard to dry by the heat of the sun. This takes from a fortnight to three weeks, according to the weather, much dew or mist prolonging the process, and darkening the colour of the dried fruit, while an east wind (shirocco) expedites it, and the colour is consequently better. While drying, the grapes emit a peculiar and most disagreeable odour.

Another product of the grapes is *Dibs*, a kind of molasses made from the juice. The following is the way in which it is, as a rule, prepared: The grapes, which should be very ripe, are sprinkled with a little powdered whitish clay called *Howwar*, and piled up either in a sack or loose on the floor of a wine-press. The ancient wine-presses, of which many are still to be found, are, as far as I know, always used for the purpose. These wine-presses consist of a shallow rectangular depression, about

4 feet square, sloping to one corner, and carefully cut in a suitable piece of hard rock. From here one or more channels run into a smaller and much deeper receptacle, close to the larger one, and, like it, hollowed out in the living rock. One often comes across these old wine-presses on hill-sides where now there is no cultivation—relics of former fertile vineyards which flourished in the days of Palestine's glory, but which have long since passed away. Where the grapes are put loose on the press, flat stones are placed over them, on which a number of men stand till all the juice is squeezed out; but where a sack is used the treaders stand directly on the bags.

The expressed juice is then ladled into large caldrons, a fire is lighted beneath, and the juice carefully boiled down. The process is not so simple as might be thought. The fire needs constant attention and regulation, as should the heat be too great the Dibs will have a burnt flavour. The syrup has also to be skimmed at frequent intervals, as the lighter impurities rise to the top. After about thirty-six hours' boiling it is reduced to one-third of its original bulk, and is sufficiently cooked. It must now be left to cool and settle, when the powdered clay, already mentioned, carries down all the coarser impurities in the form of a dense precipitate, from which, when cold, the supernatant liquid must be carefully poured off; otherwise it will not keep good, but after a while ferments and becomes sour. When properly prepared it is thin syrup, of a light brown colour and of a sweet,

pleasant taste. When kept for some time the water evaporates still more, and crystallization sets in. It is eaten by the natives as it is, or, mixed with flour and almonds, is made into various sweetmeats.

Palestine being a Mohammedan country, the natives make little or no wine, though considerable quantities are manufactured by Europeans, and also by the Jews, the latter also distilling a very strong spirit from it.

Figs are very widely grown, and, both fresh and dried, form an important article of food. There are many varieties, one village alone being said to have no less than thirty in its fig-groves. Fig-trees and vines are often grown together, as they take different substances from the soil, whereas vines and olive-trees do not thrive in the same plot, and are rarely planted together. This fact illustrates one of those minute little touches in the Gospels which show the intimate knowledge of the land, and the precise accuracy, of the sacred writings. I refer to the words (St. Luke xiii. 6), 'A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard.'

In the late spring or early summer a peculiar kind of fig is found on many trees. It is not a different species or variety, as it occurs on all sorts, but it is found from two to three months earlier than the ordinary crop, and grows *underneath* the leaf, and not in the axil as with the regular figs. The Fellahîn have a theory that it is a sign of weakness in the tree which produces it. It is very large and of a very fine flavour, and is much prized

by the natives, as was the case in Old Testament times, as we see from Jer. xxiv. 2 and Hos. ix. 10, where it is called the 'first ripe' fig. There is in Arabic a special name for it, *Duffûr*, whereas *Tîn* is the word used for the ordinary fruit.

On account of its being so highly prized, and as it is almost the earliest of any fruit, it is allowable for anyone to gather it from the trees as they pass. It was these *Duffûr*, I believe, that our Blessed Lord sought for on the barren fig-tree, *and not the ordinary fruit.* This will make the passage St. Mark xi. 13 quite clear, especially if, as is not unlikely, there were two words for the two kinds of fruit in the colloquial Semitic dialect in use in Palestine at that time, as in the colloquial Arabic of to-day. This passage would thus mean that the Saviour came hoping to find *Duffûr*, but when He came to the tree found only leaves, for the time of *Tîn* was not yet. It is somewhat remarkable, too, that while these first ripe figs are in season they are a favourite article of food in the early morning with the Fellahîn, who have no meal corresponding to our breakfast. When itinerating among the villages at that time of year, I have sometimes had occasion to ask persons who have come to me early in the day for medicine, 'Have you eaten anything this morning?' 'Yes, I have eaten two or three *Duffûr*,' has been a far from uncommon answer.

There are also in some places fig-trees of which the fruit is public property. There seems to be nothing to mark such trees, but they are well known to the people of the neighbouring villages,

and are called *Tîn essabîl*—'fig-trees of the road.' The barren fig-tree on Olivet was probably one of such trees. Persons will sometimes set apart one of their trees for such an object. Olive-trees in like manner are occasionally dedicated to churches, that the oil from them may be used to keep the lamps burning before the icons.

The figs are dried in large quantities in the fig-gardens. An open sunny spot is selected, the ground is smoothed, stones and clods of earth being removed, and here the figs as they ripen are laid, being carefully turned from day to day till they are quite dry. While this is going on they are collected each evening, and put under shelter at night, as the dews which often occur then would spoil them if left out of doors. When dry enough the fruit is stored in bulk in bins, or strung on thin twine in strings of about a hundred. These strings are called *Kalàdeh* (pl. *Kalâid*). The dried figs are known by a special name, *Kottain*, and form a very important article of food, especially of the very poor.

In the maritime plain, especially in the neighbourhood of Jaffa, numbers of gardens of oranges and lemons are found, and these fruits are being exported to Europe, chiefly to England, in ever-increasing quantities. The special Jaffa orange is a large egg-shaped fruit of pale colour and very thick rind. These peculiarities are caused by the fact that the Fellahîn graft the orange on to lemon stocks, as they find by experience that this produces a better quality of fruit than that from orange-trees grown in the ordinary way. Both fruits require a

good deal of moisture, and the trees are irrigated from the wells already mentioned, each tree being watered every second day.

Date-palms are not uncommon all down the coast, and, in fact, grow more or less throughout the country, but they only bear fruit of any value in the extreme south, in the neighbourhood of Gaza.

Besides the fruits already mentioned, pomegranates of several sorts, quinces, apricots, peaches, plums, almonds, walnuts, apples, pears, and other kinds of fruit, are found in more or less abundance. The greater part is brought into the towns for sale, but it is often spoilt by careless handling, and by its being frequently gathered too soon, this last defect being caused by fear of its being stolen if left longer on the trees.

In the autumn the dews or night-mists are very copious, and do much to refresh the burnt-up land. Early in the morning the valleys, if in the hill country, will often be found to be full of this mist, the hill-tops standing like islands out of a sea of fleecy white cloud. As the sun gets higher the mists (the 'morning cloud' of Hos. xiii. 3) melt away, leaving a cloudless sky. Every leaf and twig and blade of grass is gemmed with dewdrops, while if camping out one's tent roof is as saturated as though there had been a heavy shower of rain. This mist or dew is often referred to in the Old Testament (Ps. cxxxiii. 3; Hos. xiv. 5, etc.), and is of great benefit to the fruit. It fills out the olives and matures the grapes, although rain would quite spoil the latter.

CHAPTER XIII

MINOR INDUSTRIES

In addition to the occupations more immediately connected with peasant life, there are several minor industries which, in whole or in part, occupy the time and energies of the Fellahîn. Foremost among them I would put that of the carpenter. Most villages have their own carpenter, who makes and mends the ploughs and other agricultural implements, does whatever wood-work, such as doors and windows (wherever there are the latter), is required in the houses, and manufactures the rough boxes in which the women keep their clothes. His tools are of the most primitive description: a few tiny saws, with the teeth set the reverse way to those of our saws, a small plane, two or three chisels of various sizes, a drill worked by a bow, and a narrow, much-curved adze, in the use of which he is as skilful as a shipwright. He does not use a carpenter's bench, but squats on the ground to work, and, where he has to use both hands, holds the thing he is working at with his feet.

Payment is frequently made in kind, the peasant

giving the carpenter so many measures of wheat per annum, in return for which the other undertakes to keep his ploughs, etc., in repair. It is rarely a remunerative employment, and to make a living the carpenter must either have land of his own or must combine some other occupation with it. I knew one who was also village schoolmaster, and used to make and mend his ploughs, etc., in the courtyard of the little village mosque, with his scholars around him learning their tasks. Those I have known have all been poor, some of them very poor, and in the little town of Nazareth there would probably have been but scanty work for the carpenter, and the Saviour, in all probability, must have known at times the pinch of real want.

Lime-burning is another minor industry which occupies many of the Fellahîn, especially during slack periods. The lime which is used in building is all produced in the country. As already mentioned, the rock formation of Palestine is almost exclusively limestone, which is burnt into lime in kilns called *Latûn* or *Kibârah*. A circular hole, 10 to 15 feet in diameter, is dug in some convenient spot, and lined with dry masonry. A quantity of stone, preferably of the harder sorts, and of suitable sizes, is collected, and is then built up over the top of the circular pit in the form of a dome, in the following manner:

Round the edge of the pit is placed a row of large stones, partly projecting inwards. On them other layers of stones are placed, each successive layer pro-

jecting rather more than that beneath it, the process being continued till the central opening is small enough to be closed by two or three long pieces of stone. Smaller stones are placed on this pile to a considerable height, earth being heaped up all round to keep in the hot air. A hollow some 10 feet deep is thus left underneath the mass, and into this hollow the fuel is fed through a sloping opening. Another hole is often made on the side facing the prevailing wind, in order to supply the kilns with sufficient air. The fuel most commonly used is the *Netsh*, already mentioned, a low thorny shrub which grows abundantly throughout Palestine. This is cut and piled in small heaps to dry some time before the lime is burnt, a large stone being placed on each little heap to keep it from being blown away by the wind. These heaps of thorns cut for the lime-kilns form at times quite a feature in the landscape, and are no doubt referred to in Isa. xxxiii. 12.

The fire, once lit, is kept going day and night, and as these lime-kilns are often out in the open country, at a considerable distance from the villages, the men who work them sleep out by them, the women bringing them food and water two or three times a day. Each addition of fuel causes a great volume of dense black smoke to rise from the kiln, and on a calm day these columns of smoke can be seen from very long distances. To such kilns, and to these columns of vapour, does the sacred historian liken the smoke of the burning cities of the plain (Gen. xix. 28).

To burn the stone thoroughly requires from two to seven days, according to the size of the kiln, the nature of the fuel, and the regularity with which the fire is kept up. The method is a very wasteful one, as the fuel used in each kiln would be sufficient to burn a much larger amount of lime on a continuous system. When the mass is sufficiently burnt, the whole is left for two or three days to cool, and the lime is then removed in sacks.

Quarrying is largely carried on in the hill country, in the neighbourhood of towns. The rock found in Palestine is for the most part limestone of varying hardness. In the mountains it is extremely abundant, and it usually occurs on or near the surface. The building stone is almost entirely got by blasting. A hole is drilled in the rock by means of a long iron rod about half an inch in diameter, with a chisel-shaped end. The quarryman sits down on the rock he wishes to bore, and, holding the rod with both hands, brings it rapidly down with great force over and over again on the same spot, giving it a half-turn at each stroke. A hole more or less vertical is thus formed, a little larger in diameter than the rod. When it is an inch or two in depth, a little water is poured in, more being added from time to time. This serves both to keep the boring tool cool and to form a thick mud of the coarse powder chipped off. This mud is removed from time to time by means of a long thin rod, having at its lower end a small spoon-like projection at right

angles to its length, this mud being afterwards used in the tamping. When the bore has reached the required depth it is cleared out, and a few strokes of the iron bar having dried it, coarse gunpowder is poured in to a depth of several inches, and rammed tight. A thin pointed rod of iron, with a strong cross-handle, is pushed in to the centre of the charge, and the tamping, which is made of small pieces of stone mixed with the mud already mentioned, is rammed tightly in round the rod, which is turned occasionally as the hole fills up, to prevent its becoming jammed. When the tamping reaches the top of the hole, this rod is cautiously withdrawn, and fine-grained powder is poured down it till it is full. When all is ready, the quarrymen retire to a distance, leaving only the one who has to fire the charge. This he usually does by fastening a burning match to the end of a long stick, with which he ignites the loose powder about the top of the bore. As soon as he sees that this has caught, he makes off as fast as his legs will carry him to a place of safety. The narrow thread of powder burns but slowly, and if properly done there is ample time for the firer to take shelter before the charge explodes. If near a highroad or a place where people are about, before the shot is fired they call out loudly: 'Gunpowder! gunpowder! Beware! beware!'

The masses of stone thus detached are broken up into pieces suitable for the builder by means of large hammers, aided where necessary by iron

wedges. The stone has to be further dressed before it can be used by the mason, but this is usually done in the building-yard. Sometimes the rock is only cracked by the shot, and then huge crowbars, of enormous weight, are used to detach the loosened masses.

A good deal of paving stone exists in some parts, occurring in layers only a few inches thick; but this is not quarried by blasting, and the softer kinds, such as the *Nâreh* used for the domed roofs, do not require the use of explosives.

The method above described is a very wasteful one. Probably not more than half the material so obtained can be used. This is in great contrast to the methods apparently employed in the ancient quarries. of which numerous traces remain. There the stones seem to have been cut out one by one, each being ready squared for the builder as it was detached from the bed-rock. This seems to be referred to in Isa. li. 1. Indeed, the marks in the old quarries are still so sharp that it seems as though it would be possible, if one had the stones there, to find the exact spot from which each had been cut.

The gunpowder used in quarrying is made in the country. Certain families are considered to be particularly skilful in its manufacture, and have, no doubt, secret processes of their own. All the ingredients are found in the land. Sulphur exists in considerable quantities in the marl formation of the Jordan Valley, and is sold in the market under the name of 'camel sulphur' (to distinguish it from

the 'pillar sulphur,' as it is called, which is imported from Europe), the name being derived from the fact that it is used for a remedy for the skin diseases to which those animals seem to be peculiarly liable. Saltpetre is frequently found as an efflorescence on the walls of houses, and the keenest native sportsman I have ever known, and who always makes his own gunpowder, told me that it was from this source that he obtained his supply of nitre. It is, however, also made artificially by getting earth from caves and other places where goats are housed, and placing it in a porous vessel out of doors, but in a spot sheltered from the rain. Water is poured on this earth from time to time in small quantities. This percolates through into a vessel placed below, and as it evaporates leaves behind a mass of crude saltpetre, which is purified by recrystallization. Some of the women who make this nitre are specially clever in its production, and it is remarkable that the Fellahîn, with absolutely no knowledge of chemistry, should have discovered this process, which is practically the same as one which was (and probably is still) largely used in France for the production of this salt. The materials used for the manufacture of this native gunpowder are probably not very pure, which accounts most likely for the odour of the burnt powder, which is villainous in the extreme.

Charcoal is largely used in cooking, and also for warmth in winter, throughout the country, and in times of bad harvests or scarcity of olive

crops many Fellahîn will take to its production to eke out a living. It is made from the evergreen oak, the branches being the parts which are mostly employed for the purpose. Other trees are sometimes used, as the terebinth, deciduous oak, and even soft woods such as the arbutus, in places where the hard woods are becoming exhausted.

A bough or an entire sapling is trimmed of its twigs on the spot, cut into convenient lengths, and carried to the charcoal oven, which is merely a pit in the ground or a cave; I have even known an ancient rock-cut tomb utilized for the purpose. In the case of a cave, the mouth is walled up with stones and earth, leaving only a small aperture. The pit or cave is filled with the dry wood, and fire is applied. Clouds of bluish-white smoke issue from the narrow opening at the mouth, and as the charge shrinks in volume more wood is fed in. When the man in charge considers the whole is sufficiently burned, the opening is closed with stones and earth, so as to exclude all air, and not re-opened till quite cool. The charcoal is then carefully removed, and packed in goat's-hair bags for conveyance to the towns and villages for sale.

In valleys where there are powerful perennial springs or permanent streams there will usually be found several water-mills for grinding corn. A winding channel, carried along the side of the valley, conducts a stream of water to a point at which it is high enough above the floor to give the needful pressure. Here the mill is built. It consists of a single room, in the floor of which

the lower millstone is firmly embedded. Under the room is a vaulted space in which works the wheel or turbine which drives the mill. One of the walls of this room is carried up to about twice the height of the latter, and is either connected with the hillside by one or more arches, or is itself built out to the end of the watercourse. A channel along the top of this carries the water to a vertical shaft or chimney-like opening in the thickness of the wall at its outer end. This pipe or shaft leads down into the turbine chamber, and is called the 'cistern' (*Bîr*), probably because it is cemented, as cisterns are in order to retain the water; it is closed at the bottom, but has a lateral opening on a level with the arms of the turbine. The column of water is sometimes 20 to 25 feet in height, so that it issues with tremendous force in a horizontal jet, striking the radii of the turbine, and thus rotating them.

The turbine consists of a shaft (*'Ûd*) with a number of radial arms at the lower end, like the spokes of a wheel without a rim, and very wide, relatively, to their thickness. The shaft passes up through the floor of the mill, and also through the lower millstone, and into the upper one, which is firmly keyed on to it by means of a cross-piece of iron sunk into the stone. About a foot and a half above the stones, and fifteen inches apart, are two bars of wood securely fastened to the walls of the mill. They are called the 'ladder,' and on them rests the hopper (*Dalu*), in shape an inverted truncated pyramid. Below the mouth of the hopper

is suspended a flat shovel-shaped piece of wood called the 'bowl.' It has a raised edge all round it except at its apex, and is so hung from the ladder that it slopes somewhat towards the narrow end, in order to facilitate the flow of the grain to the stones. A string passes through it near its point, and is for the purpose of regulating the amount of grain which passes to the millstones; when it is slackened more runs from the hopper, and when it is tightened up the mouth of the hopper is closed and the flow of corn ceases. A short stick is tied across the 'bowl,' and on this rests another, with its lower end on the revolving stone, its use being to give a slight shaking motion to the 'bowl,' without which the grain would not flow from the hopper. Close by the stones is the handle by which the miller opens or closes the water-passage, thus starting or stopping the mill. The stones for these mills, like those for the hand-mills, are made of the black basalt of the Leja.

A considerable amount of pottery is made in various parts of the country. In some villages the women make the huge jars which contain the supply of water for the household. These jars are not formed on the wheel, but are built up slowly, piece by piece, by hand, and when finished are dried very thoroughly, and then burnt by heaping up dried cow-dung around them and setting fire to it. The fuel is allowed to burn itself out, when the jar will be found to be sufficiently baked. A great deal of earthenware is

also made, which is thrown on the wheel with great skill. This industry is chiefly carried on in Southern Palestine, about Gaza, where there are abundant deposits of clay. The raw material is dug out by the Fellahîn, and accidents from the falling in of the earth on them, in the pits, are not uncommon.

When the clay is brought in, it is broken up into small pieces, mixed with water, and worked into a proper consistency by treading (Isa. xli. 25) It is next 'thrown' on the wheel, as is done in England, only that the wheel is turned by the potter himself; he does this by means of a disc of wood fastened to the lower end of the shaft on which the upper wheel is secured, and of similar dimensions to it (hence the Hebrew term 'the two wheels,' Jer. xviii. 3). The various articles when finished are left to dry, and then burnt in kilns, the fuel used being the coarse part of the straw left after the *Tibn* is separated, and which consists of the knots and lowest parts of the stalks next the ground. When burnt, the jars and other articles are put in network sacks made of a coarse tough grass, and sent on camels and donkeys to all parts of Palestine.

On the coast of the Mediterranean, and also on the Sea of Galilee, there are a good many men who gain their living by fishing. In the former a casting-net, the αμφιβληστρον of the New Testament, is chiefly used. This is a circular net of very fine twine, and small in the mesh; it is attached in the centre to a long cord, and round

FISHERMAN.

AN "UPPER ROOM," OLIVES DRYING ON ROOF.

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the circumference is weighted with lumps of lead. While riding along the coast one may often see a fisherman with clothes tucked tightly up round his waist, and one of these nets over his left arm, wading thigh-deep in the broken water near the beach, and intently watching the shoals of fish as they swim about. Stooping and crouching down to render himself as inconspicuous as possible, he now advances, now retreats, till a shoal is in a favourable position, when, with a dexterous twist and sudden fling, he sends the net spreading out to its widest extent over its prey. Often the cast is in vain, or but a single fish is brought to shore, but at other times a considerable haul rewards his patience.

Both on the Mediterranean and on the Sea of Galilee seine nets (σαγηνη) are used with boats, as was done in our Lord's time; and on the latter sea now, as then, the fishing is chiefly by night. When being rowed on one occasion across the Sea of Galilee, the boatmen apologized for rowing slowly: 'they had been fishing all night, and were tired,' they said. Many of the small fish caught in the Sea of Galilee are dried and sent about the country, being eaten as a relish (ὀψάριον, St. John vi. 9) with bread.

There are a few jewellers among the Fellahîn who either live in a village or wander about from place to place, making the rings, bracelets, chains, and other ornaments, of which the peasant women are so fond. Silver is the metal chiefly used, and that largely mixed with alloy; gold is rarely seen.

The jeweller's apparatus is very primitive. It consists of a rough pair of scales for weighing the metal; a plain portable hearth of clay, shaped like a large centre-dish for fruit, and about 15 inches high; a rude oil-lamp, with a large wick for blowpipe work, a curved metal blowpipe, and one or two forceps. With these simple tools they sometimes turn out very neat work. They seem to work entirely by rule of thumb, following traditional patterns and devices.

Among *minor* industries may be mentioned the making of mats. Chairs are unknown, except where European ideas and customs have begun to take root; but even the poorest like to have something to put on the floor on which to sit, and for this purpose straw, or rather rush, mats are common everywhere. There are two kinds of these mats: the larger and cheaper kind are made in the maritime plain, of the dried stems of a species of papyrus. This plant grows in considerable quantities in the swamps from which the short rivers flowing into the Mediterranean take their rise. I do not know whether or not it is identical with the African papyrus, but it is very like it, except that it is smaller. The rushes are tied side by side till the mat has reached the desired length, the manufacture being simple in the extreme. They are usually about 7 feet wide, by 8 or 9 feet in length. A smaller but superior kind of mat is made in some of the hill villages about Jerusalem from the stems of a species of grass.

The Fellahîn are very skilful in *basket-making*.

They use twigs of various shrubs, such as willow, mulberry, etc., and the stems of a species of smilax and other creepers. Of these, baskets of various shapes and sizes are made. One sort, with a handle, is called *Kertulleh*, and is much used for carrying small quantities of figs, grapes, olives, etc. A strong, shallow, handleless basket, about 18 inches in diameter, and 4 or 5 inches in depth, is employed by the women in carrying grain, vegetables, fowls, etc., to market. The latter kind is often covered with skin to render it stronger still. Another sort, known as *Kuffeh*, is made from the flexible stems of a short grass, and is largely employed in carrying stones for mending the roads, earth for making mortar, in gardening operations, and for a variety of purposes where an Englishman would use a wheel-barrow, the loads in such cases being carried on the head by the women, and on the hip by the men. A strong double basket, or pannier, for donkeys is made from the same material.

Yet another kind is made from wheat straw. A coil of this material, about the thickness of one's little finger, is produced by taking a number of straws of different lengths, and binding them tightly by a straw, flattened and rendered flexible by squeezing it with the finger and thumb-nail, spirally round the coil. This is wound round and round on itself, each coil being sewn to the adjacent ones, till a flat, circular sort of tray of the desired dimensions is produced. The coils are then continued at right angles to the bottom till the sides are sufficiently high. These baskets are sometimes

ornamented by dyeing the outer wrapping straws, and working them in to form patterns.

Large round trays are made in the same way by the women. Some are worked in elaborate patterns, while others will have a little round looking-glass embedded in the centre. The colours are often tastefully blended. They are used for various domestic purposes, often serving as dishes to hold bread, grapes, figs, etc.

There is a widespread belief that there are treasures buried in the earth all over the country, and some peasants make it their regular occupation to dig for old graves in the hope of finding these treasures. In this way large quantities of antique glass, ancient lamps, and other articles, are found, and command a ready sale at the hands of the dealers in such things in the towns. Immense numbers of graves have thus been rifled, especially within the last few years.

Shoemaking is another industry of the larger villages. The shoes made by these village cobblers are only the rougher, heavier kinds, the soles being of camel or buffalo hide, and the uppers of sheepskin, dyed red. Sometimes these shoemakers go about from village to village, chiefly *repairing* the shoes of the people. They remain for a few days in the place, as long as there is anything for them to do, and then move on.

Some of the men are clever at hunting game. Partridges, gazelle, wild-boar, and ibex, are the creatures they shoot. The former (partridges) abound throughout the land, there being several species, in-

cluding the large, handsome Greek partridge, the Dead Sea species, which is peculiar to Palestine, and the francolin. For these birds they often use a lure, which consists of a piece of calico with various devices painted on it, and fastened to two sticks in the form of a St. Andrew's cross. There are usually two holes in the upper part for the hunter to look through, and one in the centre for his gun. They use this in rather an unsportsmanlike manner, creeping up towards a covey holding this screen before them, and when they get near they stop, and the partridges, which are bold and inquisitive,* when they see this strange-looking object, instead of taking flight, gradually come nearer and nearer till within range, when the man fires. The wild boar is still fairly common in the Jordan Valley and the better-wooded districts, and the Fellahîn sometimes organize regular hunts for the purpose of killing them, as not only the Christians, but also some of the Moslems, eat the flesh.

The men spin a good deal of coarse thread from the wool of their sheep and the hair of the goats. A mass of the raw material is wrapped loosely round the left hand, and the spindle with which it

* The Fellahîn say that the fox is fully aware of this trait in the character of the partridge, and takes advantage of it in the following manner: He lies down on a rock in the open with limbs stretched out, mouth half open, and saliva running from it as though he were dead. When the curious birds catch sight of their enemy in this condition, they come slowly up to see if he be really dead, and, when near enough, with a sudden spring he seizes his victim.

is spun is attached to it by a piece of the thread. The spindle is simply a stick about 9 inches long, with two cross-pieces about 1½ inches from the lower end. It is weighted with a stone or piece of potsherd, and is used in the following manner: A long thread is drawn out with the fingers of both hands, and roughly and loosely twisted. When about 3 feet long it is held tightly between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, at the further end from the spindle, and a vigorous spin is given to the latter by a dexterous turn of the right hand, the thread being thus twisted as tightly as desired by its rapid revolution. The two or three feet of finished thread are then wrapped round the lower end of the spindle, looped over the upper end of the shank to keep it in place, and the process repeated. It is astonishing to see what an amount of coarse thread a man can thus spin in a day, and of what even thickness he manages to keep it. This thread is used for various purposes, such as making ropes, haircloth for tents, nose-bags for horses, and for weaving the cloaks so much worn in winter. The men work very industriously at this during the wet days of winter and spring when no field labour is possible. The women do a small amount of it, but, naturally, have not the same time as the men.

Haircloth for the tents—or 'houses of hair,' as they are called in Arabic—is woven in a good many places from the coarse thread just described. This haircloth is made of the black goat's hair, no other colour, apparently, being permissible, the only exception being that sometimes there is a longi-

RUINED TEMPLE NEAR TOBÂZ (THE ANCIENT THEBEZ).

WEAVING HAIRCLOTH FOR TENTS.

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tudinal stripe of dark gray. This work is now, I believe, invariably done by women; but the fact of this having been St. Paul's trade (Acts xviii. 1-3) shows that this was not the case in Apostolic times. The process is simple and primitive to the last degree. The long threads to form the warp are stretched out in some convenient and fairly level spot in the village. That which is to form the woof, instead of being placed in a shuttle, is wound lengthways on a flat piece of wood about 30 inches long and 3 inches wide, somewhat resembling a gigantic netting-needle. With this in her hand, the weaver laboriously threads the woof through the warp, and then with an iron hook (*Sîa*) deftly tightens up the thread against the part already woven. The threads of the warp are passed through a series of loops attached to a piece of wood, and suspended so that every other thread is alternately raised and lowered, much as in a European loom, though the mechanism is of the rudest possible description, having to be turned by hand each time the shuttle is passed through the warp. It goes without saying that the process is very tedious, but, owing to the dexterity which the women acquire not so much so as might be supposed. A strong, rough kind of carpet is woven in the same manner in some districts, as well as sacks, bags, and such-like articles.

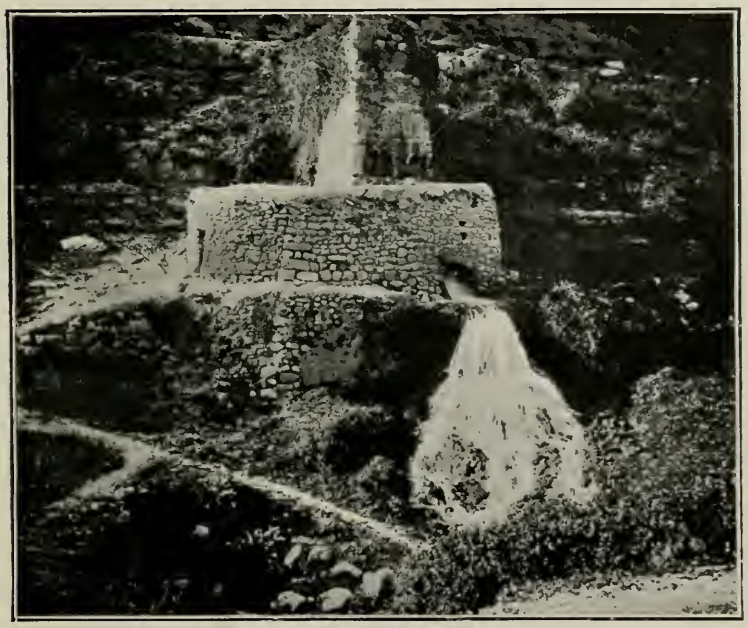
At one time a great deal of weaving was done by the Fellahîn, and though goods of European manufacture have to some extent crippled this industry, yet there are still many looms to be

found in various parts. Simple though they are, the work they turn out is neat and durable. The working parts of the loom are on a level with the floor, and a hole is dug to accommodate the treadles which raise and lower the alternate threads of the warp, the weaver sitting on the edge of this hole and working the treadles with his feet. The thread of the woof is wound on little bobbins, made of pieces of hollow reed, inserted in the shuttle, which is skilfully and quickly shot through by hand. The thread is wound on the bobbins by a little piece of apparatus consisting of a rude wheel with a cord passing over it to a reel on a spindle, on which the little pieces of reed are fixed.

One of the principal articles produced by these native looms is the heavy cloak worn by the peasants in winter. The warp of these cloaks is white cotton, which is imported from Egypt in the form of yarn, but the woof is of wool. In weaving, the workman, after shooting the shuttle through the threads, catches the woof-thread with his thumb about the middle, and draws it up in a semicircle before pressing it home. This seems to give greater density and closeness to the material. These *Abas*, or cloaks, are woven in broad stripes of black and white, are very strong and durable, and fairly waterproof.

Mention may be made, too, of the mother-of-pearl work for which Bethlehem is famous, though this cannot be called an indigenous industry, having been introduced from Egypt two or three centuries ago. The shells are brought from the Red Sea.

WEAVING.



A WATER-MILL, JEBEL AJLÛN.

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The work is all done by hand, and some of the specimens are very beautiful. There is a growing demand for olive-wood articles, and in a few cases some of the Fellahîn have begun making various objects in the villages, the raw material being cheaper there than in towns. They sell them in the shops in Jerusalem and elsewhere.

CHAPTER XIV

MISCELLANEOUS

The roads in Palestine are for the most part rough tracks, or else mere paths across the country. In the hills they are very stony, and in the plains frequently impassable in the winter owing to the deep mud. During the Roman occupation of the country fine paved roads were made in all directions, of which extensive remains still exist both east and west of the Jordan, with milestones, the inscriptions on them being often still decipherable, recording how, under such a Cæsar or in such-and-such a consulship, the road was made or repaired. These Roman highways, however, from having been neglected for centuries, are now useless for wheeled traffic. The large blocks of stone which once formed a smooth, level surface for scores of miles are now tilted at every possible angle, the earth between has been washed away, and in places rough masses of rock protrude from below, or the surface is strewn with large loose pebbles, so that the line of the track resembles the bed of a mountain torrent more nearly than anything else.

When, however, a Christian Patriarch or Government official of high rank is about to visit a district, or even merely to pass through it, it is customary to send word in advance to the various villages on the route, that the road may be put in order. The stones are cleared out; the vineyard walls, which are built of rough blocks without mortar, and are consequently frequently broken down by men or animals getting over them, are repaired; ruts are filled up, and the highway made as smooth as circumstances will permit. I have on several occasions been agreeably surprised, when travelling about the country, on coming to some particularly bad piece of road, to find the stones gone, the walls repaired, and the path in good order.

As one travels about the country one hears a great variety of salutations. Indeed, these salutations are so numerous and varied that they form quite a study, there being different ones in different parts of the country, and special ones on special occasions or for the various events of life. When two Moslems meet each other, they usually greet each other with the words '*Salâm alêkum*' (Peace be upon you); to which the proper reply is, '*Wa alêkum es salâm*' (And on you be peace), the pronoun being usually in the plural instead of the singular, even where only one person is addressed, this being considered more polite than the use of the singular, the same custom obtaining in writing letters. This salutation is not used by Christians to one another, nor is it usual for Christians to use it to Moslems, nor Moslems to Christians—indeed,

the more fanatical Moslems would highly resent its use by or to Christians. In some districts, however, where there is little bigotry on the part of the Mohammedans, or where they and the Christian villagers are on specially friendly terms, I have frequently heard it exchanged between Moslems and Nazarenes, as they call us. This used to be the custom about Kerak, in Moab; but when a few years ago the Turks took possession of the place, which till then had been only nominally under their rule, the officials tried to stop it, and a public order was issued forbidding the practice, on the ground that 'there was no peace between Moslems and Christians.'

When Christians meet, a common salutation is, '*Allah m'akum*' (God be with you), to which those thus addressed reply, '*W'Allah yahfathak*' (And may God preserve thee). In the morning, whether in the house or on the road, the usual greeting is, '*Subahkum bilkhêr*' (May your morning be good, or prosperous), the response to which is the same. In many cases they reply to a salutation by one similar, but better, rather; thus, a very common one during the day is, '*Nahârak sa'id*' (May thy day be fortunate), the answer to which is, '*Nahârak mbârak*' (May thy day be blessed), the latter being stronger than the former. These two salutations can be used at any time during the day, but in the afternoon, especially after about three o'clock, it is more usual to say, '*Masîkum bilkhêr*' (May your evening be prosperous); but in the Lebanon there is a curious custom of saying, '*Lêlatak sa'id*'

(May thy night be fortunate) any time from noon onwards.

When meeting a stranger on the way, or when one arrives at a village or house, a common salutation is, '*Marhabah*' (A welcome), to which the person so addressed replies, '*Marhabatên*' (Two welcomes). Should the one who gives the first welcome be a person much respected, or well known to the other, the reply will often be, '*Mît marhabah*' (A hundred welcomes). A very characteristic greeting to a guest is, '*Ahlan wa sahlan*'; rendered quite literally, this means, 'People and a plain'—*i.e.*, 'You are among your own people, and all will be made easy for you,' being a wish that you may feel quite at home. This last word occurs in another greeting: two friends meet on a journey, and on parting one will say to the other, especially if the latter have a long day's march or a difficult road before him, '*Allah yusahhil alêk*' (May God make it smooth, or level, for you), a peculiarly appropriate farewell in a land like Palestine, where so much of it is rough and hilly. The phrase is also used metaphorically of any difficult undertaking.

While on the subject of travelling, a curious phrase must be mentioned which people meeting on the way use when they wish to ascertain where one is going, viz., '*Wên ala bab Allah?*' or more simply, '*Ala bab Allah?*' (Where—to the gate of God?). The idea of the phrase is said to be that the person addressed is thereby implied to be bound on some good errand, and therefore not ashamed to say whither he is bound, and very

rarely will a man refuse to give an answer to the question thus asked. I think that there is also a wish implied, as in so many of their salutations, that a blessing may rest on the enterprise, whatever it may be. Similar phrases are also used sometimes with the same meaning. I was once riding alone in a very out-of-the-way part of the country, when I met an old peasant woman. She was evidently greatly surprised to see a foreigner alone in that out-of-the-way place, and, after gazing intently at me for a moment or two, greeted me with the words 'Wither with God?'

A traveller passing Fellahîn ploughing, or engaged in any other hard labour, greets them with the wish, '*Sah badanu*' (May He [God] strengthen his body)—that is, that he may be able to do his work properly. The one so addressed replies, '*Badanu*' (His body), simply reciprocating his wish, or, on the principle mentioned above, of adding to the wish, *Badunu sellimu* (His body, and may [God] give him peace, or health). In the Belka and other parts east of the Jordan, a common greeting by the way is the phrase '*Kowwak*' (pronounced 'gowwak,' the *kâf*, as is usual among the Bedouin and the Fellahîn of Eastern Palestine, being sounded as a hard *g*), viz., 'May God strengthen you,' the reply to which is, '*Kowwêt*'—that is, 'I am strengthened.' A similar salutation not uncommonly heard is, '*El aw'afah*' (Health). Among the Fellahîn a host who is looking after his guests, and going in and out among the people, will, every time he comes into the room, repeat

the ordinary salutation 'Good-day' or 'Good-evening,' according to the time. When guests arrive at a person's house or the guest-room of a village, the people of the place crowd in, usually, to see and salute them. When a man enters, he slips off his shoes at the door, and walking across the room to the principal guest (if there be more than one), and taking the latter's right hand between his two hands, says, '*Selimât*' (Health, or Peace), and then does the same to the other guests in order of their rank. Should the guest be a man of high position, as a Bishop, Patriarch, or a *Sharîf* among the Moslems (*i.e.*, a lineal descendant of Mohammed), the other will raise the guest's hand to his lips and kiss or attempt to kiss it, the other often drawing it back, as though unwilling to receive the homage. When the man has thus saluted the guests, he seats himself among the people present, and when he is fairly settled in his place the guests turn towards him and wish him 'Good-evening,' or whatever be the suitable salutation, the rest of the company following suit, all this being repeated with each new arrival.

An ordinary question is, 'How are you?'—literally, 'How is your state?' Among Moslems it is not proper to inquire after a man's wife. Should he be a person whom one knows well, one may say, 'How is your family?' or, 'How are the people of your house?' A frequent reply to all inquiries like these—or, if a person has been ill, to a question as to how his health is—is, 'Praise God,' or, 'I thank the Lord.'

Indeed, it is often very difficult in such circumstances to ascertain the real state of a person's health, it being considered unlucky for anyone to say that he is worse, even if such be the case. Another reply to the formal inquiry, 'How are you?' is, '*Taht nathurak*,' an answer which contains one of those delicate bits of flattery at which Orientals are adepts, meaning as it does, 'I am under your oversight' (or 'care'), implying, 'How can I be otherwise than well when you are looking after me?' When one thanks a person for any favour or kindness done, he often says, '*Istaghfur Allah*' (I beg pardon of God), as though by being thanked he had sinned by receiving or accepting what was due to God.

At the New Year or on occasions of great festivals a special greeting is used, viz., '*Kul es senneh wa entum salimîn*' (May you be well, or in peace, all the year), the reply to which is, '*Wa entum sâlimîn*' (May you, too, be in peace). Another greeting at festivals is, '*El 'îd mubarak fîk*' (May the feast be blessed to you), the answer being simply, '*Fîk*' (And to you). At Easter, moreover, the well-known salutations, '*El Masîh kâm*' (Christ is risen), '*Hakkan kâm*' (He is risen indeed), are still used by the members of the Orthodox Greek Church.

When a person is leaving after a call or visit, he says to the host, '*Khâtarak*'—literally, 'What is thy wish?'—to which the other answers, '*M'a salâmeh*'—literally, 'With peace,' meaning, 'My wish is that you may return home in peace or safety.' This

expression, 'Go in peace,' is also a polite way of getting rid of a beggar or other objectionable person, and perhaps the passage 2 Kings v. 19 ought to be so interpreted, and not, as is generally done, be held to mean that the prophet assented to Naaman's wish. As a guest rides away from the door of a house where he has been calling or staying, the host will usually ask him to salute So-and-so in the place he is going to, or, if he does not know anyone there, he will say '*Sellim*' (Salute).

In a hot, dry country like Palestine, large quantities of water are drunk, and when people are gathered together in an evening the water-bottle is going round frequently. After drinking, a man must say in a low voice, 'Praise be to God,' on which those near him say, 'Your health,' to which he replies, 'May God give thee health.' It is considered a very bad omen if no one says this when anyone has drunk. A story is told of a wealthy Moslem who, when he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, hired a man on purpose to stand near him at meals, etc., and say 'Your health' after he had drunk. For several days the man never said a word, and at last his employer asked him why he had never said 'Your health,' and the other replied, 'Because you never said, "Praise be to God."'

When coffee is served to guests or others, the person who presents the cup does so with his right hand, putting his left on his chest, and saying, '*Tafaddul*,'—that is, 'Do me the honour' of taking the coffee—and as he takes it the other

generally says, '*Isht*' (May you live long), while as he returns the cup after having drunk, he says, '*Daimeh*,' which is, literally, 'Always,' being a devout wish that the host may always have coffee to give to his guests, on which the host, or else the person, often a member of the family, who is serving the coffee, says, '*Sahatên*' (Two healths). If, however, a death has recently occurred in the house, it is not proper to use the expression 'Always' after the coffee, as it might be taken as an evil wish that there might always be a death in the family.

After a death in a house, when entering it, or on meeting a person who has recently lost a near relation or friend, instead of the ordinary salutation, one says, '*Salâmat râsak*' (The health, or peace, of thy head), the other responding with '*Salâmat oulâdak*' (The health of thy children). When a person who has been away for a considerable time from a village is inquiring about the people there, and happens to ask after anyone who is dead, instead of saying directly 'So-and-so is dead,' they say, '*Atâk umrahu*' (He has given you his life [or age]), this being equivalent to a wish that God may add to the life of the other the years which the dead man would have lived had he fulfilled the complete term of his existence. I have even heard it used hypothetically of a sick person who was known to be dying. Thus, once riding home to Jerusalem, I overtook a young fellow I knew, and stopped to inquire after an old man in his village who was dangerously ill. 'Probably he has given you his life' was the reply, meaning,

of course, that by then he had probably passed away.

With the word 'Blessed,' we greet a friend who has moved into a new house, or to whom a child has been born, or other piece of good fortune come; he replies, 'May you be blessed.'

If a person is wearing a new garment, or has any new thing with him, and another congratulates him about it, he will sometimes reply with the words, '*Alalhabl îdak*' (Your hand is on the rope), as much as to say, 'It is at your disposal,' and should the other reply, '*Hâtt*' (Give), he would be obliged to give it him. The precise meaning of this curious phrase is very variously explained, some explanations of it being very far-fetched. The idea is, I believe, really a simple one, and taken from that of an animal tethered by a rope, one end of which is in the owner's hand, who thus can make it go wherever he wishes.

There is a great deal of etiquette about salutations, though often it is not observed. Thus, a man riding should always first salute a man walking; a man riding a horse must first salute one riding a donkey. Moreover, should a man riding by on a horse salute another sitting by the roadside, the latter must not rise, as he otherwise would, to return the salute, lest his doing so suddenly should frighten the horse, making it rear and throw its rider. Again, should a man enter a room where guests are at a meal, he must not salute them at once, but wait till they have done eating, as Arab rules

of politeness require a greeting to be instantly returned, and one of them might have his mouth full at the moment, and be choked in the attempt to reply to the other's greeting.

Kissing the hand by way of salutation has already been mentioned. In many cases this is actually done, not only by an inferior to a superior, but children to their parents, even when the former are grown up. A man who has been absent from home for some time will, on entering the house, greet his father thus, and it is a beautiful sight to see a strong middle-aged man gracefully stoop and raise his old white-haired father's hand to his lips. A wife will also greet her husband in this way if he has been away several days. Indeed, in Palestine it would be considered highly improper for a man to kiss his wife before others, or a brother a sister, as is done in Europe. Among the Christians a priest will kiss his Bishop's hand, and the laity will kiss the right hand of a priest. Often when inquiring after a child the father or mother will say, 'He kisses your hand.'

I have no doubt in my own mind but that it was thus that the traitor Judas greeted the Saviour in the Garden of Gethsemane (St. Matt. xxvi. 48, 49). It would be a perfectly natural salutation to his Master on the part of a disciple who had been some hours absent, and would therefore not excite the suspicion of the other apostles, while at the same time it would clearly indicate to the soldiers the Prophet of Nazareth. On the other hand, a kiss on the cheek, as Western pictures of

KISSING THE HAND.

GREAT MOSQUE IN DAMASCUS (INTERIOR).

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our Blessed Lord's betrayal always represent it, though used in Palestine, would only be given by very dear friends or near relatives after a prolonged absence.

To kiss the feet is a rare, though not unknown, greeting, and indicates the lowest depths of humiliation, the most earnest entreaty, or the deepest gratitude. Occasionally persons will actually throw themselves on the ground at the feet of him whom they thus entreat, but more often they will kiss their own fingers and then try to touch the feet of the other. This latter mode of salutation is a common one, and is alluded to as an act of worship in Job xxxi. 27.

To kiss the beard (either actually, or by touching it with the right hand, as mentioned just above) is also a token of great respect or of humble supplication. Several times have persons who wanted some special favour from me tried to thus show their respect. This, too, seems to me the explanation of the action of Joab mentioned in 2 Sam. xx. 9—viz., that he touched or took hold of Amasa's beard to kiss *it*, hypocritically pretending to pay great honour to him whom David had just appointed captain of the host, and while stooping to salute him thus both disarmed his rival's suspicions and saw where to strike the fatal blow.

Beards are universally worn by the men, and one who cannot grow a beard is looked upon as something uncanny, and the Moslems especially think it most unlucky to meet such a man on setting out on a journey. There is a proverb

about this which runs: 'Meet goblins in the morning rather than a beardless man.' The beard is much respected by them. 'How is your beard?' is a salutation I once heard. 'May God reward your beard!' was a blessing once invoked on me by a would-be recipient of alms. A man with a sharp-pointed beard—indicative, I believe, of a pure Arabic descent—is supposed by the Fellahîn to have special intellectual power. Such a man is called a *Kûsah*. In illustration of this they tell the following story: 'The great enemy of mankind, wishing to find a pretext to injure the people of a certain village, sent his son to ask them to weave a carpet of flint. He told the messenger that on no account was he to ask the question if a *Kûsah* were present. When he arrived at the village, he found all the elders assembled in the guest-house, and, looking round, could see no one at all answering to the description of the man he was to avoid. Accordingly he proffered his request. It so happened, however, that there was such a man there, lying down behind a row of people, and covered with a cloak. When the evil spirit had done speaking this man rose up and said: "Tell him who sent you that if he will spin the flint into thread we will weave it into a carpet for him." Whereupon the fiend retired discomfited.' This story is widely known, and, though foolish enough to Western ears, is often alluded to, and men of this description are liable to much fun being made of them, but they are generally equal to the occasion.

Recently one of them went to a large village in the Nablus district, and as usual was taken to the guest-house. One of the elders of the place, who had a very fine beard, welcomed him, and then said laughingly: 'Sir Kûsah, can you spin flint?' The latter made no reply, but after a while, when a number of people were assembled, and there was a lull in the conversation, he said: 'I want to buy hair; is there any to be had in your village?' 'Oh yes, plenty,' said his hosts. 'How much per rottle (6½ pounds)?' 'So much,' was the reply. Then, pointing to the fine beard of the joker, he asked: 'How many beards like this will it take to make a rottle?' There was a roar of laughter at the other's expense, and he was so teased about it that he was glad to purchase silence by a good present to the Kûsah.

Neighbours play a very important part in the daily life of the Fellahîn, both for good and evil. This is more or less inevitable in all countries, but particularly so in Eastern lands, where the houses are crowded together much more closely than is the case in our English villages. There are in Palestine no outlying farmhouses, and no labourers' cottages scattered here and there. Till quite recent years no one would have dared to build a house by itself away in the open country, and even to-day, although there is much greater security than formerly, it would not always be safe to do so. The houses are all found in the villages, and usually are crowded together as closely as possible, chiefly, no doubt, for mutual

protection. The smaller the circumference of the village *ceteris paribus*, the easier it was to defend it in case of attack. Consequently the houses join each other, or several will be built round a common courtyard, all opening into it. This naturally throws the inhabitants of adjacent houses or rooms very much together; consequently the mere fact of a man being a neighbour is held to constitute a claim on his good offices. Hence the proverb, 'A neighbour who is near by rather than a brother who is far off.' Even where the neighbour is not all he ought to be, it is recognised that one has a duty to him, as says the proverb, 'Neighbour, you must bear with your neighbour, even if he throw stones at you.' On the other hand, the evils of bad neighbours are fully recognised. Thus one of their proverbs says: 'A house without a neighbour is worth a hundred dinars'; and again: 'Inquire about the neighbour before you ask about the house.' A sound piece of advice is contained in the following: 'If your neighbour hate you, change the door of your house'; while 'A bad neighbour is infectious' is profoundly true. Another, 'Search your house several times before you suspect your neighbour,' if carried out everywhere, would prevent much trouble and quarrelling in other countries besides Palestine.

The Fellahîn are exceedingly hospitable, and are always ready to give food to any guest or stranger who asks it. This hospitality is looked on as a religious duty, and is most ungrudgingly dispensed.

Along the great caravan routes and other main

lines of travel khans or inns will be found. In olden times Kings and great men sometimes built such places where needed ; the beautiful ruined Khan et Tujjâr on the road between Tiberias and Tabor will be an instance familiar to most travellers in Palestine. Such places seem to have existed in Old Testament times also, as the Khan of Chinham mentioned in Jer. xli. 17. Off the lines of travel no such places are to be found in the country districts where the passing stranger can get food and shelter.

Each village, however, has its guest-house, and if large, or its principal men wealthy, there may be several. These guest-rooms play an important part in the village life. Here any strangers who may wish for a night's lodging are received, if they have no friends or relations in the place. Here, too, come the Government officials when collecting taxes, or on any other business. In the guest-house the villagers gather when a stranger arrives in order to hear the news, for newspapers are but rarely seen in the country places, and but few comparatively can read, so they still depend largely on passing strangers or a chance visitor from a town for their knowledge of what is happening in the outside world. The guest-house is sometimes a room in the sheikh's house, but more commonly it is a building by itself in a central position, and occasionally, chiefly in the smaller hamlets, the same room is guest-house and mosque. It is a large room absolutely devoid of furniture ; there is often a sort of hearth in the centre where a fire is lit

when needed for making coffee for guests, or in cold weather for warmth. The roof is generally black with the smoke of years, as there is rarely any sort of chimney, and the smoke fills the apartment, escaping only through the door and window.

It is a picturesque sight which these guest-rooms present at night, with a crowd of swarthy men seated on the ground in various easy attitudes around the central hearth, on which burns a fire of twigs, the bright blaze lighting up their weather-beaten faces and bringing into sharp relief the white beards of the older men. The long pipes are filled and lit, and their smoke mingles with that of the fire. There is the hum of conversation all round, or else breathless silence while someone tells a thrilling tale of adventure, robbery, or war; or an animated discussion takes place over some matter of keen local interest. Many an evening have I spent in the village guest-houses, and many an attentive audience have I had as I told the story of redemption in Jesus Christ to the Moslem villagers.

If a guest arrives during the day for an hour or two's rest, a mat will be spread for him, and mattresses and cushions fetched from the sheikh's house, and he will be urged to take his rest; food will generally be quickly brought—two or three loaves of bread and some olives, or grapes or figs, according to the time of year, or, if a person of importance, a fowl will be killed and quickly cooked for him. If, however, he stay the night, a more substantial meal will be provided. After the

KHAN IN THE LEBANON.

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evening prayers in the mosque, a large copper tray or wooden bowl, heaped high with boiled rice or cracked wheat, or sometimes with wheat below, for the ordinary guests, and rice above for the more distinguished ones, is brought in. On the rice are joints of meat, mutton, or goat's flesh (the ordinary peasants never eat beef), and the master of the ceremonies carries an armful of round flat loaves of bread which he distributes at intervals round the dish. The guests then take their places, having first washed their hands. With a 'In the name of God,' each plunges his right hand into the pile of rice, and dexterously rolling up a ball of it, conveys it to his mouth. The meat, which is always boiled, is very thoroughly cooked, so that it is easy to detach pieces with the right hand, it being considered very bad manners, especially by the Moslems, to use the left hand. The sheikh waits personally on the guests, often holding the light that they may better see, urging them to eat, or tearing off some dainty piece and putting it before some guest whom he wishes specially to honour.

The Fellahîn do not usually drink till towards the close of a meal, and then they do so as a rule from the *Sherbeh*, or water cooler, which is a small pitcher with a spout at one side, from which they pour the water into their mouths without touching the vessel with their lips, as they all have the knack of swallowing the water with their mouths wide open.

After supper coffee is invariably served. This

beverage is so widely used that it may almost be said to be a necessary of the Arab's life. On the arrival of guests it is always offered to them, being made then and there. If no fire be actually burning at the time, a few sticks are taken and kindled, and the requisite number of coffee-beans are placed in a large shallow iron spoon and carefully roasted over the flame, being stirred with an iron rod all the time to prevent them burning. When sufficiently roasted they are poured into a mortar made of stone or wood, and pounded with a wooden pestal, the coffee-maker beating a sort of tattoo on the sides and bottom of the mortar with the pestle as he does so. This sound produced by anyone who is clever at it is much admired by the Arabs, and is not unpleasing to a European ear. When pounded, the fragrant powder is put in a deep brass or iron pot, with the due amount of water, and placed on the embers to boil. To get the full flavour out of it, it ought to be brought to the boil four or five times, being allowed to subside as often by removing the vessel for a few seconds from the fire. When ready, the coffee-maker takes one or more china cups, which he usually washes out first, and, pouring a little coffee into one cup, next empties it into the other cups in succession, and then drinks it himself. This is to show that there is no poison in any of the cups, a common method of getting rid of an enemy being by means of a cup of poisoned coffee. The preliminaries being concluded, the coffee is served out.

The cups, which are of various shapes, contain

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COFFEE-MAKING.

PEASANTS OF THE JEBEL AJLÚN.

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usually but little more than a good-sized egg-cup, and are filled about two-thirds full. It is proper to sip it slowly, and somewhat noisily, to show one's appreciation of it! Guests or strangers, in order of rank or precedence, are always served first, unless there be someone of much higher position than anyone else present. It is drunk both sweetened and unsweetened, the latter being always served after a meal, and milk is never added; at other times a guest will often be asked whether he prefers it 'sweet' or 'bitter.' When the cup is returned to the server, the latter receives it in his left hand, and immediately covers it with his right, lest the guest's feelings should be offended by the sight of the grounds! The Fellahîn are great connoisseurs of coffee, though not quite so much so, perhaps, as the Bedouin, and it is used on all manner of occasions. Hardly ever is a bargain set about without this preliminary; every guest as he arrives must be welcomed with it, and it is wonderful how it smooths over obstacles and prepares the way for an amicable settlement of difficult and contentious matters. In my itinerant missionary work I have, times without number, proved it invaluable in collecting an attentive audience to listen to my message.

Children are not usually given coffee in the guest-houses, or on public occasions, and when a youth begins to have it habitually he is considered to have come to man's estate. A few of the more ascetic Moslems do not drink coffee, classing it with alcoholic beverages forbidden by their prophet.

Technically speaking, no doubt they are right, the Arabic word for coffee being an archaic term for wine. But there can be little doubt but that it was transferred to coffee, and that the latter is not included in the prohibition referred to in the Korân.

The food and coffee for guests, and fodder for their horses, is usually supplied at the cost of the villagers in general, but different plans are adopted in different places for assessing the people. In one village I know, the families in rotation supply any guests there may be with supper. In this case each family gives some different article to the sheikh of the place, and he arranges these in order; and when the family whose object is next in the row has provided supper in its turn, its token is removed and placed last, and so on till the whole is finished, and the turns begin again.

In another place I know well the food for the soldiers who come to collect the taxes, and the corn for their horses, is assessed on the people according to the amount of land each owns. The name of each proprietor of land is written on one or more pieces of paper, according to the smaller or larger number of *Feddadîn*, or acres, he has, these pieces of paper being strung on a thread which is then fastened to a stick in shape of a bow, all the papers being pushed to one end. Each time a man (the next in order) provides food or fodder for the soldiers the piece of paper bearing his name is pushed to the other end of the string. At yet other places the villagers pay a fixed amount per annum towards the cost of entertaining guests.

CHAPTER XV

MISCELLANEOUS (*continued*)

JUSTICE was formerly almost exclusively administered by the village sheikhs, and though, since the introduction by the late Midhat Pasha of European modes of civil government, the Ottoman Power has taken these matters more into its own immediate control, yet many cases are settled locally without ever coming into the Turkish courts. This holds good not only in minor matters, but even in such serious ones as murder. Custom and unwritten law have much to do with these things, and though now the Turkish authorities intervene in many cases, yet there are very many of which they never hear, or of which they take no cognizance. In the cases where they do intervene I have never once known the death penalty to be inflicted, even where there was no manner of doubt as to the man's guilt. The utmost that has been done in such cases is to sentence the criminal to fifteen years' imprisonment, which is usually carried out in the 'Blood Prison' of Jerusalem or in that of Acca—a punishment which, as the natives themselves say, is wholly inadequate as a deterrent. Where, how-

ever, the people take the matter into their own hands, blood can, as a rule, only be atoned for by blood. Thus, if a man were murdered, his relations might kill any member of the family of the man who had committed the crime, however distantly connected he might be, and nothing would be said; or, instead of putting the murderer to death, they might plunder him of everything. Failing any relation of the criminal, any friend, or even anyone from the same clan or village, may be put to death. This custom is still in force. Some years ago I was travelling east of the Jordan in a district with which I was unfamilar, and accordingly took a guide with me, who was to go as far as a certain town in Western Palestine, the latter part of the journey being quite new to him. The last day, after we had crossed the Jordan, I happened to mention incidentally that we should pass a certain village, at which he expressed great alarm, telling me that a man from there had lately been murdered at his village, and the murder having been not yet arranged about, he felt sure he would be killed were he recognised by the people of the place we were approaching as being from the district where the murder occurred. Happily he was not detected, but he was in great trepidation till we had got safely past.

Sometimes a murder is settled by a money payment arranged between the relations of the murderer and murdered person. Recently a man from a village near Jerusalem murdered another from a place in the maritime plain. The affair was finally

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settled by the people of the former place paying a sum of £200 to the people of the latter, and giving a girl also, worth at least £50, as a bride to a man there, the people from the village in the plain being allowed to come and choose any girl there.

In cases where a man is murdered, and the murderer is also killed on the spot, no information is given to the Government, and no more notice is taken of it, as the affair is considered to be closed by the death of the latter.

If a man is found murdered by the wayside, a small cairn of stones is piled upon the spot, and each person from the dead man's village, as he passes, throws a stone upon it until the murder is arranged, or until, from lapse of time, the affair ceases to be remembered. Such cairns are often seen near the road, and are known as *Rujm Fulân* (So-and-so's heap), or simply as *Meshad—i.e.*, a witness.

There are villages in different parts of the country whose inhabitants are notorious as thieves; indeed, there are people whose business is to go about the country stealing animals. I once came across a couple of these fellows who were professional donkey-stealers. They would cut out a straggling ass from a caravan, or an animal which had been sent out to graze with others, and which had wandered too far from a not overwatchful herdsman. These men would not stop at murder should the owner arrive on the scene and attempt to recover his property, provided the risks were not too great. There is a not inconsiderable amount

of cattle-stealing in the same way, the animals being driven to a convenient town and sold to the butchers ; and if common report is to be credited, a good deal of the beef sold in Jerusalem is obtained in this manner.

A certain amount of smuggling is carried on in salt. Salt is a monopoly of the Turkish Government, which manufactures immense quantities from sea-water. This is sold throughout the country, each family in the villages having to buy from the authorities a certain amount per annum. As is well known, enormous deposits of salt exist in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, and this is smuggled to a small extent by the Bedouin, who bring it by night to the villages and sell it at a much lower rate than the Government article.

There is a bad custom, happily but rarely found, of injuring people, or of revenging an injury, real or imaginary, which consists in cutting down a person's olive or other fruit-bearing trees, or injuring them so that they gradually die. It is, however, looked upon by the people themselves as particularly barbarous, and is but seldom resorted to ; but I have known a few cases of it, one of them being of a particularly atrocious character. A man died, leaving to his only son, a child, certain property, part of which consisted of fruit-trees—olives, figs, etc.—the land on which they grew, in accordance with the peculiar tenure already explained, not being his. One morning it was found that during the night all the trees had been cut down, doubtless by, or at the instigation of, the owner of the ground,

the child thus losing, by Turkish law, all claim to the ground, and its value to the other owner being of course greatly enhanced thereby. No attempt was ever made, as far as I know, to bring the offenders to justice.

If a person who is much disliked for any reason leaves a village, at the time of his departure someone takes an old jar, or other earthenware vessel of no value, and as the obnoxious individual goes out of the place dashes it to the ground behind him, shattering it in pieces. Two ideas underlie this, one being that the person against whom it is directed is as worthless as the old jar, and the other the hope that their return will be as impossible as the restoration of the shattered vessel.

Beggars are numerous in Palestine, and will become more so, since the poverty of the country as a whole is steadily increasing. I do not mean by beggars the people who tease travellers on the beaten tourist track for *Backshîsh*, an annoyance for which the travellers themselves are chiefly responsible, but those who are systematic beggars. There are what may be called professional beggars, who year by year put in an appearance in the chief towns as the tourist season comes on, and of whom a few are well off. There are many others, chiefly from the villages, who are really very poor, or who are from some bodily infirmity unable to work, and have no one to support them. They may be seen, any day almost, sitting by the wayside with outstretched hand (an attitude which probably suggested to St. Paul the graphic simile in Rom. viii. 19) near

some well-frequented shrine, or outside the gate of a city, asking for alms. 'Alms!' they cry—'alms, sir!' 'Alms, O lady!' 'May God preserve your children!' 'An offering' (that is, to God); or, more simply still, 'God exists,' 'God is gracious.' Or they come round to the houses with their importunate cry. They receive a great deal from the people, chiefly in the shape of food, alms-giving being repeatedly enjoined on Moslems in the Korân, and being considered to win merit in the world to come. In rich families, if a member is sick, loaves of bread will be put round the patient's bed, and then given to the beggars in hope that it will be accepted as an offering to God on his behalf, and that he will recover.

Borrowing is one of the curses of Palestine; almost everyone borrows, and the rate of interest is abnormally high—this not so much because of insufficient security as because the borrower is at the mercy of the lender. Most men, do what they will, have at times to borrow, chiefly because of the changed and changing conditions of life and government to which a people, one of the most conservative on the face of the earth, naturally is very slow in adapting itself. As has been already mentioned, the Fellâh may be comfortably off, well clad, have abundance of wheat, a good store of dried figs, lentils, barley, etc., in his bins, a flock of goats and sheep, several yoke of oxen, a good mare or two, and yet possess hardly any money. One day the Government officials appear, usually without warning, at his village, and he has to pay a

large sum down in hard cash. After scraping together every para that he can find, and calling in all the small local debts due to him, he is still a large amount short. What can he do? A merchant from the city is there, or a Moslem grandee, with his pockets full of dollars, and he is willing to accommodate our Fellâh; but he must have not only substantial security, but a good rate of interest also—20, 25, even 30 per cent. (I have known 40 per cent. demanded and given for a large loan). 'What can I do?' says the poor man. He knows quite well that, were he to say, 'I can't get the money just now,' he would be probably marched off to prison, if unable to bribe the collector to wait; besides which it would cost him a great deal more to get out of prison, in addition to his loss of time, than the interest he must pay to the money-lender. Then, if the harvest be a failure, or the olive crop short, and he cannot repay the principal, the enormous interest runs on and has to be paid year by year.

Few of the peasants are provident enough, when they have money, to put any by for taxes or other emergency, so when there is any sudden demand for ready-money, the man who has it to lend can make almost any terms he likes. Savings-banks are unknown; the few banks there are in the country are all in the towns, at a considerable distance often, and none of them will now, I believe, lend on the security of land, and if they did, their history has sometimes not been such as to inspire the peasantry with confidence in them. The borrower generally

gives a mortgage on his house and land, and the lands of whole villages have sometimes been thus acquired by one man, and at far less than their real value.

All this applies to comparatively large transactions; where the amounts are smaller, or the security is less, higher rates than these are charged, especially where the loan is for a short time only. Thus, sometimes there is a great demand for the Turkish dollar, in which certain Government dues have to be paid, and for the loan for a few weeks of these coins interest at the rate of upwards of 100 per cent. per annum is by no means unknown.

People often borrow to enable them to marry—that is, to pay the dowry demanded by the bride's father; or a man will borrow to enable him to 'buy' an eligible bride for his son. This is well illustrated by one of their proverbs, 'He who marries on borrowed money, his children pay the interest,' such debts often remaining like a millstone round the neck of the man and his family to the end of his life.

The taxation of the country is a very serious question from whichever side it is viewed. Direct taxation is quite a modern innovation, and is a result of the attempt, due largely to the initiation of the late Midhat Pasha, to Europeanize the codes and methods of the Ottoman Empire. The present system has been gradually introduced within the memory of some still living in Palestine, and as now administered shows how unsuited European, or quasi-European, methods may be to Orientals.

The taxes are numerous, and press very heavily on the people. There is the land-tax on all but freehold and Church property; the sheep-tax, so much per annum on every sheep and goat; a road-tax, for making roads in the province where it is levied, although the roads are often delayed for many years; tithes, which are, legally, a tenth of the crops and an eighth of the tenth, but which in practice may be anything. In addition to these, help is frequently asked for the Sultan, and this impost, though in theory optional, as a matter of fact is compulsory. All the above-mentioned taxes are levied on Moslems and Christians alike, but in addition to them Christians have to pay a military tax. As a badge of servitude they have never been allowed to bear arms, and in lieu of military service all males have to pay a yearly poll-tax. But the chief burden of taxation consists rather in the manner of its collection. This is done by mounted gendarmerie, who come to a village without warning and stay there till they have got the amount they want, living meanwhile at the expense of the Fellahîn. By law, whatever is supplied them or their horses ought to be deducted from the taxes, but, as a matter of fact, I have never heard of its being done; and these soldiers expect to be supplied with the best of everything in the village.

The taxes are not assessed in most cases on the individual villagers, but on the village as a whole. The lands, moreover, which from time immemorial have belonged to certain villages, are still reckoned as belonging to them, even though much of them

may pass, and in many instances actually has passed, into the hands of persons belonging to other places. A man may thus own land belonging originally to half a dozen villages, and which in the Government books is still entered as part of the property of those places; consequently, instead of paying a lump sum to the Government for these various properties, he has to do it through the local representatives in each place. These representatives (*Ikhtiyariyeh*) are chosen by the different houses or families, and it is to them, with the village sheikh, that the Government sends orders as to the amount of taxes demanded from each village, and they have to make the best terms they can for their people. They have to sign or seal the formal document stating the sums required in any year from their village, and without their signature or seal the amount cannot be legally demanded. Sometimes they stand out against what they consider to be an exorbitant demand, but there are various ways of bringing pressure to bear upon them, and the document is usually signed without alteration. When this is done the amount required has to be apportioned amongst the villagers. These representatives wish to feather their own nests, and so they add something for themselves to the already heavy burden of taxation. In the apportioning also of the various sums to be paid by different people there is room for an immense amount of favouritism and unfair dealing.

Sometimes the taxes, after being paid to the Ikhtiyariyeh, are paid directly to the Government,

but more often there is a middleman, who is called a *Multezzim*, or farmer of taxes, who has bought from the Government the taxes of a village for a year for a certain fixed sum. The Multezzim expects, of course, not only to recoup himself what he has paid to the exchequer, but also to make a handsome profit, and to enable him to do so, all the power of the authorities is at his disposal should he wish to invoke it. This, again, opens the door to every kind of exaction, especially where, as is sometimes done, the village representatives, instead of resisting an unjust demand on the part of a Multezzim, will accept a bribe from him to say nothing, while the unhappy villagers are mulcted in a far heavier tax than they ought legally to pay, and have absolutely no redress. It need hardly be said that these Multezzimîn are detested by the people, who are usually willing to pay the Government a larger sum than *they* offer for the taxes, in order to avoid their exactions.

The characteristics of the people of different villages vary greatly. Thus, the inhabitants of one village are notorious thieves, while the adjoining village is well known as an industrious and honest one. At one the inhabitants are skilled in some trade or business, while at the next they are lazy and ignorant. Some villages are notoriously stupid. A story is told of one, not many miles from Jerusalem, that on a certain occasion not a single person in it had any idea what day of the week it was, and they had to send one of their number to a Christian village some miles away to ascertain! At another

village, in a year of very short rainfall, only one large cistern full of water remained to supply the wants of the inhabitants. This they decided to divide amongst them, and proceeded to do so by laying sticks across the top, a place being assigned to each family from which to draw, and the space allotted to the sheikh of the village being twice as wide as those for other people, on the ground that he had to supply guests as well as the wants of his own family!

A curious custom of partnership in mares is widely spread. If a mare is of really good breed, or even if only a good walker and with good qualities, it is usually too expensive for one man to buy the whole of it, and he will own half, a third, two-thirds, etc., as the case may be. The man who feeds the animal has the use of it, but the foals are given to the respective owners in proportion to their shares in it. Thus, if two men own a mare between them, they will have the foals alternately; but if one has two-thirds and the other only a third, the former has, of course, two out of every three foals, and the latter only one, and so on.

I once bought half a mare from a man who professed to own the whole, but I found after a while that there was another partner who had a fourth share in her. Joint ownership in a steed is considered to constitute a special link between the two parties. 'It is,' so the man above mentioned explained to me, 'as if I had married your daughter or you had married mine!' This quasi-relationship (at least, where a European is concerned) is rather

a nuisance, and in my case I terminated it as soon as I could by purchasing the rest of the shares.

The Fellahîn like to let their horses' tails grow very long, and in the case of white or gray (*blue*, as the latter are called in Arabic) horses they often dye them a bright orange colour with the leaves of the henna tree (*Lawsonia inermis*). In winter they tie them up in a knot to keep them out of the mud. They take it as an insult if anything be done to the tail. I knew of a case where a man had a beautiful long-tailed mare, which on one occasion, while its owner was at a village on business, was put in a stable where was another mare with a foal. This foal during the night bit off a great part of the visitor's tail, a not uncommon trick of foals in Palestine, and the owner of the foal had to give the other man a valuable present to make up for the injury or slight thus done to him.

The native saddles are much broader than ours, being very thickly padded, and are very uncomfortable for Europeans to ride. The bits are exceedingly powerful, and even cruel things, but quite unnecessarily so. The horses' mouths are no harder than those of Europe, and in the case of horses I have had for any time I invariably used an ordinary English bit with curb, but always rode them on the snaffle, and found it sufficient, except when they tried to bolt. The stirrups are great shovel-shaped plates of iron or brass, the corners of which are used instead of spurs. The Arabs ride with very short stirrups, retaining their seats by their splendid balance rather than by the grip of the

knees. They guide their horses, too, by the pressure of the rein on the neck of the steed, and not by the bit. In the hot weather, especially on long journeys, a cloth is usually tied under the horse's body over the girths in order to keep off the flies, which are a terrible torment at times to both horse and rider. For the same purpose ornamental trappings of wool are hung over the horse's neck, falling over its chest, the numerous tassels flapping about as the animal goes along helping to hinder the flies from alighting on its body.

The Fellahîn are very shrewd in giving nicknames to people, seizing on some peculiarity, characteristic, or feature. Thus I remember a traveller who had long flowing whiskers who, in accordance with a well-known Arabic idiom, was promptly dubbed 'the Father of Two Beards.'

The reckoning of time is always very puzzling to a new-comer to Palestine, there being practically four different methods. The Jews have their ancient reckoning, the ecclesiastical year beginning at the Passover, in the spring, and the civil year in the autumn. The Mohammedan year is a lunar, and not, as ours, a solar year. It is, therefore, twelve or thirteen days shorter than ours, and their Moslem New Year's Day travels backward, so to speak, that number of days every year. The Christians, on the other hand, follow the solar reckoning, but here again there are two different ways of calculating the time. The Oriental Churches follow the *Eastern* reckoning, better known in England as the Old Style, and that which still

obtains in Russia. The Roman Catholics and Protestant bodies use the *Western* reckoning in common with the greater part of the civilized world. In all legal documents it has to be clearly specified which reckoning is intended. The error in calculation which has produced the difference in the Eastern and Western times increases this difference by a day each century. Thus, in 1900 the difference between the two amounted to twelve days, and in 1901 to thirteen. This fact, together with the different manner of calculating Easter, makes a considerable difference each year in the interval between the days on which the Eastern and Western Churches observe the festival. Thus, very occasionally the two coincide, but usually there is an interval of one or more weeks between them, and even sometimes it amounts to as much as five weeks.

The day in the East is still considered to begin at sunset, and in Arabic the term 'to-night' means what we should call 'last night.' Thus, two friends meeting on a journey will sometimes ask each other, 'Where did you stay to-night?' an expression which sounds strange to us, but is by their reckoning the correct one.

A common way of reckoning for the repayment of loans among the Fellahîn is from harvest to harvest, or, as they phrase it, 'from threshing-floor to threshing-floor.' I once heard of a peasant who borrowed a sum of money from another, which was to be repaid in a year. They 'wrote a paper,' as the saying is, about it. Soon after a townsman,

a friend of the creditor, heard of it, and, meeting the man one day, inquired if he had taken the precaution of stating the date at which the loan was to be repaid, and was assured it was so. On asking to see the document, he found that Mohammed Abdullah promised to pay Hassan Ahmed such-and-such a sum when next the *fakûs* (a kind of cucumber) were ripe!

Another thing which is peculiarly trying and puzzling to a foreigner at first, and which, even after many years' residence and a wide experience, adds enormously to the difficulties of book-keeping, is the complexity of the coinage. As already mentioned, there is but little actual cash in the country. In the towns this is to some extent obviated by the large amount of foreign money in circulation, especially the twenty-franc pieces of France, Italy, Austria, Greece, etc., as well as some of the silver currency of those countries; but in the villages the only foreign money which will be accepted is the gold coinage, the small change being Turkish only. It is well known that the piastre is the unit by which the values of all coins are calculated throughout the Ottoman Empire; but, strange as it may seem, there is now no such coin as a piastre in existence in Syria, although the coins are all either multiples or fractions of the piastre. The consequence of this is that this imaginary coin has different values in different parts of the country; thus, in Jerusalem the Turkish dollar, the Mejîdie—so called from having been first coined by a former Sultan called Abd-ul-Majîd

(Slave of the Glorious One)—is worth twenty-three piastres, at Jaffa it is worth twenty-five, but at Gaza it is equal to forty-six. Nor is this all: the merchant has one piastre, the Government another. In the shop, the bazaar, and in all the commercial transactions of daily life, prices are stated in the former, which is known as *Shuruk;* while taxes, stamps, telegrams, Government fees, etc., are calculated in the latter, known as *Sâgh.* The hindrance which all this complicated system is to commerce is better imagined than described.

In witnessing legal documents, wills, contracts, deeds of sale, and in signing letters, a man's signature has no value in the East: he must affix his seal to them. This no doubt arose from the fact that very few people could write, and that, as to-day, most letters were written by a scribe or professional letter-writer, consequently the fact of a man's name being appended to a document was no proof that he was bound by its contents; so seals were invented, each person having his own seal, made of brass or silver, with his name engraved on it, and this he carried about with him. To give one's seal to another man to use on one's behalf would imply unbounded confidence in him, and would be like giving a signed blank cheque to another in England. I have, however, occasionally known this done when some important document had to be witnessed and one of the signatories could not be present; the absentee sent his seal by someone else to be affixed to the deed. The seal is not used, as in England, with

wax, but ink. A little of the thick native ink is spread over the seal with the tip of the little finger, and then allowed to become nearly dry; the paper at the spot where it has to be affixed is next damped, and the seal is pressed on it, and leaves a black disc with the inscription in white in the centre.

The musical instruments of the Fellahîn are few and simple. The commonest is the pipe. This consists usually of two reeds, about the thickness of a finger, fastened side by side, with six holes in each. In the top of these reeds two smaller ones are inserted loosely, forming the mouth-pieces. These are formed as follows: A thin reed is taken, and a piece about 3½ inches long is cut off at a joint, the upper end being closed by the joint; the lower and open end is trimmed to fit closely in the upper end of one of the large ones; then a notch is cut about two-thirds of the length of the mouth-piece from the top, just through the wall of the reed, and a cut made up to the joint, thus forming a tongue or vibrator, which remains attached at its upper end. The second mouth-piece is exactly like the first, and both are attached to the rest of the pipe by strings that they may not be lost, as they fit but loosely into the latter. To play the instrument the two mouth-pieces are put in the reeds, and then inserted in the mouth, up to the top of the large reeds. Both are of the same pitch and produce the same notes, the object of the second pipe being merely to increase the volume of sound. The different notes are produced by playing the

three fingers of each hand across the two rows of holes. Sometimes the pipe has the second reed much larger than the first, and without holes, the effect being like that of the drone of the Highland bagpipes. Occasionally other substances than reeds are used. I once had a pipe which was made of the leg-bones of a vulture. Another kind of pipe is made of a single large reed, in appearance rather like a flute, but blown from the upper end instead of from the side.

Another musical instrument is a kind of violin. This consists of a rectangular box made of a wooden framework over which a skin is tightly sewn. From the centre of one of the short sides an iron pin projects, and from the opposite one a horn or piece of rounded wood about 20 inches long. A single string of several strands of horsehair is fastened to this iron pin, and, passing over a little wooden bridge near to the lower end of the box, is secured to a peg in the horn, the peg being used to tighten up the string, as in our violins. The bow is formed of a stout rough twig, with a few horsehairs stretched tightly across. The player sits to play, holding the instrument before him, resting it on the ground by the pin at the lower end.

Small hand-drums made of pottery, in shape like the neck and upper part of a large jar, are much used on festival occasions ; animal membrane is tied tightly over the larger end, the smaller one being left open. It is held under the arm, being beaten with the palm of the hand.

CHAPTER XVI

PROVERBS

No work on the Fellahîn could be at all complete which did not give some account of their proverbs. Throughout the East the proverb or parable (in colloquial Arabic the two are synonymous) plays a very large part in conversation, teaching, and controversy. One reason of this is that the Oriental mind, as compared with the Western, is not a logical one. Close-reasoned argument appeals but little, even to educated men. With all classes, but especially with the uneducated, an apt illustration or an appropriate proverb will be infinitely more convincing than the best reasoned and most logical proof.

Our blessed Lord's frequent use of parables and metaphor is in the fullest accord with the mental processes and characteristics of the Gentile inhabitants of Palestine to-day, as it was with those of their Jewish predecessors of His own time. Very instructive, too, is the difference in this respect between the writings of him who, an Oriental by birth, was by education largely a Western, the Apostle St. Paul. In his Epistle

to the Romans, a Western race, we have closely-reasoned argument of the very highest order; but in that to the Galatians, a race Oriental in its characteristics (whatever its origin may have been), we find little or no argument, but much illustration.

If this holds good of the East generally, it does so very especially of the Arabic-speaking races, and the Fellahîn of Palestine are no exception. Their language is one which lends itself peculiarly well to terse epigrammatic expression. The wide area over which it is spoken, and the great length of time during which it has been in use, have also tended to enrich it in this way. From a literary point of view the Arabs distinguish between the proverb (*Methal*) and the aphorism (*Kâdthah*), but in practice all are included in the former term.

The number of Arabic proverbs is enormous, and large volumes of them have been published. The Fellahîn have many in current use, and no inconsiderable portion of these are peculiar to them, not being found in any known collection. Of those current among the peasantry I have collected some nine hundred. No doubt a good many of these are included in one or other of the various collections, but a considerable portion are not found in print. It is of the greatest value to the missionary, and, indeed, to all who wish to be able to enter fully into the conversation of the people, to have a good knowledge of the more generally used proverbs and sayings, not only as illustrating the mode of thought of the people, but also as giving the European an effective means of conveying teaching in a form

readily assimilated by the Oriental. 'We have a proverb' or 'like the proverb' is a frequent clincher to a statement or proof.

It goes without saying that, as in other languages, many a proverb is untranslatable, its whole point turning on a play on words, an alliteration, or an onomatopoetic term, and the like.

Archbishop Trench, in his lectures on Proverbs, speaking of the collection of modern Arabic saws gathered in Egypt by the traveller Burckhardt, says that they reveal 'generally the whole character of life, alike the outward and inward, as poor, mean, sordid, and ignoble, with only a few faintest glimpses of that romance which one usually attaches to the East.' Such words, however true they may be of the particular collection to which they are applied, are certainly in no way applicable to those under review now. The really bad proverbs are, as far as my experience goes, very few; here and there one comes across a coarse one; some there are which one must class as cynical; while yet others with shrewd, but not unkindly, hand reveal the real motives of a fallen nature, shared alike by Easterns and Westerns; many show a kindly wit, and some are really beautiful.

Of course, not a few of these proverbs express, with local colouring, ideas which are found in all ages and wisdom common to all nations. Among these the following will readily suggest parallels in our own and other languages: 'If speech be silver, silence is gold.' 'Rippling water will not drown anyone.' 'One bitten (by a snake) fears a rope.'

'Stretch your legs according to your bed,' which expresses the same idea as our proverb, 'Cut your coat according to your cloth.' 'Dine and rest, sup and walk,' of which there is a longer version, 'Dine and rest, though but for two minutes; sup and walk, though but two steps.' 'Don't say "beans" till they are in your bag' is the equivalent of 'Don't count your chickens before they are hatched,' the circumstance that the words in Arabic for 'bag' and 'beans' rhyme with each other being the reason for the form of this proverb. 'The eye sees not, the heart grieves not.' 'Absent from the eye, absent from the mind.' 'Borrowed clothes don't last.' 'When cooks increase the food is burnt.' 'Live in a place and eat of its onions' (a very favourite vegetable with the Fellahîn). These, taken almost at random, will illustrate the similarity of thought and expression which produced the proverbs in our own language and Arabic.

'The head has much headache' is a good instance of a saying which depends for its point on a two-fold meaning of a word, 'head' signifying also 'chief' or 'sovereign,' the proverb being thus the equivalent of our 'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.'

Among a race so religiously-minded as the Syrians, this feature is sure to be shown in their proverbial sayings. The following specimens will illustrate this: 'Men depend on men and all on God.' 'There are no two together but God makes a third.' 'An hour's blessing is worth a year's labour.' A belief in God's care for the humblest

even of His creatures declares itself in 'God breaks the camel to give the jackal a supper.' That the fact of man's inherent sinfulness has been grasped we see in the following: 'Two only sin not, the dead and the unborn.'

Those who have travelled in the East, and have suddenly come on the hideous spectacle of the bloated carcass of a horse or camel lying by the wayside, with vultures, ravens, and the half-wild dogs tearing at it, will appreciate the insight of 'The world is a carcass, and they that seek it are dogs.' In contrast to this is a very beautiful one on humility: 'Low-lying land drinks its own water and that of other places.' One on patience runs: 'Patience opens the door of rest.' A very fine one is, 'Every soul is monarch in its own body.' Covetousness is rebuked by 'Nothing will fill (*i.e.*, satisfy) the eye of man but a handful of earth (*i.e.*, the grave)'; while the uncertainty of all human things is depicted by 'The world is a wheel, one hour for you, the next against you.' The result of sin is forcibly shown by, 'The devil's flour turns out all bran.'

Full of wisdom are the two following: 'The rose left a thorn behind it, and the thorn a rose.' 'A fool threw a stone into a well; a hundred wise men could not get it out.' Some of the proverbs are keenly sarcastic; one such which is particularly applicable in the East, where a sort of clan life is in vogue, is, 'Your relations are your scorpions,' the point of the comparison lying in the similarity of the words for scorpions and relatives, which differ

only in the initial letters. The impossible is expressed by, 'One hand can't hold two water-melons,' a fact self-evident to anyone who has seen those of Palestine. An unreasonable man who seeks the unattainable is described as 'wanting a wooden cat which will mew and not eat.' A stupid woman who does not see that her duty is at home is depicted by the following: 'She left her husband sorrowing, and went to comfort people at another village.'

'Between Bâna and Hâna our beard disappeared' is suggested by the well-known story of the man who had two wives, one old, the other young; the former pulled all the black hairs out of his beard, the other all the gray ones, and thus between them he was left beardless, a great misfortune to an Oriental. Another proverb on the beard is, 'Hair on hair makes a beard,' being the equivalent of the Scotch one, 'Mony a little makes a mickle.'

The hospitality of the Fellahîn comes out in their proverbs; a good instance is, 'A small house will hold a hundred *friends*'—*i.e.*, if they be really friends; or, 'Trade by the dram, generosity by the hundredweight.' 'Who sows kindness reaps gratitude' is unfortunately not always true, and is counterbalanced by another, used of an ungrateful person, which runs: 'Like the mule, you give it its fodder, it gives you a kick.' The fact that a small kindness often results in a greater is graphically shown by, 'A gift goes on a donkey and returns on a camel.' But it is only right to add that this proverb has another side to it, and that it is a

common practice to give a small present *with the view* of bringing back a more valuable one. Another referring to hospitality is, 'Feed the mouth, and the eye will be ashamed'—that is, the person will be ashamed to do you harm.

Eastern justice (or what passes as such) is the subject of several proverbs. Its inconsequence is satirized in the following: 'If the tailor commits a crime, we hang the saddler.' Someone must be punished to save appearances, and the one who comes handiest suffers, whether he be guilty or not. 'He who goes to the Kadi alone will come back satisfied' is too obvious to require explanation, and the same applies to 'Delay weakens justice.' 'The sheikh's child is a sheikh,' 'The prince's dog is a prince,' 'The respect for the slave is from the respect for his master,' are all self-evident.

In the East saddle-bags are frequently carried on horseback, being fastened to the back of the saddle *behind* the rider. In them are placed the impedimenta for the journey, or the things purchased in the town. This has given rise to a proverb on ingratitude, which is as follows: 'We let him ride behind us, and he put his hand into the saddle-bags': the one who has been given a lift repays the kindness by using the opportunity to steal from his benefactor. Another, suggested by the long journeys over the rough tracks called in the Orient, by courtesy, roads, is, 'A long road brings out faults.'

Trade, as might be supposed, gives rise to a good many. 'Partnership is parting' (an instance of the

very few cases where an alliteration, or play on words, can be translated) shows the bad side of business matters. The meaning is that they who formerly were friends, when they go into business together, soon cease to be such, a sad comment on the sharp practices common in those countries, though by no means confined to them. Such practices are illustrated by 'Selling is loss, buying is trickery,' and rebuked by 'Greed is injury, not gain.' 'One can't be both merchant and astronomer' is a truism. Another declares that 'You may overcome all enmity but that of your rival in trade.' 'Don't praise the market till its close' is sound advice, as is 'Don't start a khan with one donkey.'

Agriculture is another fruitful theme. The following will show what a variety there is on this subject. 'The crooked furrow is from the old ox.' 'The diseased sheep infects the whole flock.' 'What is fallow is fallow, what is ploughed is ploughed'—that is, the matter is closed and the opportunity gone. 'The reckoning of the threshing-floor does not tally with that of the field'—used of disappointed hopes. 'The master's eye is a second spring.' The spring is the time when the grass grows abundantly and animals are turned out to graze and get into condition, so the word has come to be used colloquially as meaning abundant pasture; this will make clear the idea of the proverb. 'March milk is forbidden to unbelievers.' This saying betrays its Mohammedan origin; the milk is at its best in March, and,

therefore, with the usual Moslem intolerance, is to be denied to those of other creeds, who are all contemptuously classed together as unbelievers. 'When the cow falls there are many to flay her,' 'Like a camel ploughing, he treads down as fast as he breaks up,' 'As you sow, thus you shall reap.' 'There is dew and simoon when the olive blossoms set,' need no explanation.

Of what may be called moral proverbs there are many; the following is a fine one: 'The patient man conquered, the impatient became an unbeliever.' The adulation of the rich is ridiculed in, 'If a *rich* man eat a snake, "How wise!" say they; if a *poor* man, "Oh, he is poor!" The two following enforce the truth that circumstances will not change a man's nature: 'The dog is a dog though it wear a gold chain, and the lion a lion though brought up among dogs,' and 'The child is a child though kadi of the town.' Idleness meets a sharp rebuke in 'A hundred lazy men won't build a mosque' and 'The idle man's head is the Devil's home,' or 'storehouse,' as another version has it.

The proverb, 'Much pulling (of the rope) cuts the well's mouth,' is said to have originated in the following story: A boy, once upon a time, found the study of Arabic grammar so difficult that he despaired of ever learning it, and finally ran away from school. After wandering about a long time, tired and thirsty, he sat down by a well where Arab women were drawing water, and noticed how, in the course of years, the soft ropes had worn

deep grooves in the hard stone coping of the well. 'My comprehension,' thought he, 'is not so dense as that stone, and grammar can surely, in time, make more impression on it than these ropes have made on the coping, so I will try again.' Accordingly he went back to school, and (so the story runs) ultimately became a famous Arab grammarian.

Speaking of grammarians, there is a very curious proverb which runs as follows: 'I seek the protection of God from a Moslem who prays, a Christian who turns grammarian, and a Jew who has grown rich;' the reason of the saying is apparently that in each case the man has become intolerably proud and conceited. The first part of the proverb throws a lurid light on Moslem religiousness, and well illustrates a fact, with which anyone who has lived much in the East is only too familiar, viz., that a Mohammedan who has the highest reputation for sanctity may be one of the vilest of mankind, and that frequently the more outwardly devout he is, the less will his every-day life bear inspection.

The average Oriental feels responsibility but little, especially in regard to other people's property, a characteristic well brought out in the following: 'Like him who lost his aunt's donkey, if he find it he sings, and if he doesn't find it he sings.' Poverty and riches supply many sayings, such as the following: 'The penniless is the king's debtor.' 'The pauper is the king's enemy.' 'Wealth which comes in at the door unjustly goes out at the windows.' 'The marriage of paupers only increases

beggars.' Speaking of beggars suggests rather an amusing proverb, used of a pupil who has eclipsed his teacher: 'We taught him to beg, and he has anticipated us at the doors.'

In the East, as everywhere else in the world, the tongue is a common cause of discord and disagreement, while the outdoor life, and close proximity of the houses in the towns and villages, furnishes unlimited facilities for gossip, with consequent quarrels and mischief. 'Sit between two funerals rather than between two washerwomen,' says one. The point of this is that in the spring and autumn a number of peasant women, after heavy rain, will go out together into the fields or valleys, where pools of water from the storm are to be found, and work off their arrears of laundry work. On such occasions, as may be well imagined, all the scandal of the neighbourhood will be discussed. Another proverb runs, 'The gossip of two women will destroy two houses,' and another, 'An evil tongue, like a shoemaker's knife, cuts only filth.' The special force of this last saying lies in the double meaning of the word 'cuts,' which signifies both 'to cut' and 'to utter words.' The trade of a shoemaker has always been rather looked down upon in the East, and regarded as an unclean one. For this reason, it is said, the evidence of a shoemaker was at one time not accepted in a court of law.*

* A different explanation of this was once given me by an educated Syrian, viz., that it was because shoemakers formerly were chiefly Christians. But it is, I think, more probable that this fact arose from the trade being considered unclean,

There is much practical wisdom in the following: 'A slight concession to your enemy, and he will grant you all you want'; but the next proverb arose from a much sadder experience of life: 'An enemy will not go but at the cost of a friend.' Self-sacrifice is described as 'Like a candle which lights others but consumes itself,' to which may be added, 'He who hurts not himself does not benefit his friend.' The desirability of having an opinion of your own is enforced in 'Consult him who is older than yourself and him who is younger, and come back to your own opinion.'

Very characteristic is this proverb: 'I speak to you, O daughter-in-law, that you may hear, O neighbour.' A precocious child is described in 'The clever chicken crows in the egg.' One of the most frequently quoted proverbs is, 'Haste is from the devil' (and one very widely acted on!). The ape is the Oriental ideal of ugliness, as the gazelle is the embodiment of beauty; hence the saying, 'The ape is, in his mother's eye, a gazelle.'

A few more miscellaneous proverbs are: 'The dog will bark at the king.' 'The dead is the best of his family.' 'The cat's away; look sharp, mouse!' 'Search your house ten times before you suspect your neighbour.' This last, if acted on, would often save much trouble.

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and that Christians, who were kept constantly reminded of the inferiority of their position, were compelled to confine themselves to what were held to be degrading occupations. Especially would this be likely to be the case where the trade in question carried any civil disability with it.

Loquaciousness is not considered a virtue with Easterns, hence the following: 'Much talk lowers even the estimable.' Wine-shops are considered by the abstemious Orientals as decidedly disreputable; this fact gives rise to the next saying, used to show how calumny makes a crime out of nothing: 'He built a wine-shop out of a raisin.'

The three following proverbs, which show much insight and knowledge, may fittingly close this sketch of the wit and wisdom of the Fellahîn: 'An hour's pain rather than pain every hour.' 'Outside marble, inside ashes.' 'Who has made you weep has instructed you, who has made you laugh has ridiculed you.'

GLOSSARY

'Alim, plural *'Ulema:* literally, a 'learned person,' specially one who has studied at the Mohammedan University of El Azhar, in Cairo. N.B.—Among the Druzes the 'Ulema are the Initiated—*i.e.,* those who know the inner secrets of their religion.

Belka: 'uninhabited' or 'uncultivated.' A tract of very sparsely inhabited country south of Es Salt, east of the Jordan.

Fellah, plural *Fellahîn:* feminine, *Fellâhah,* plural *Fellahât:* literally, a ploughman; the peasantry of Palestine.

Ghor: a 'hollow' or 'depression.' The name given by the Arabs to the valley of the Jordan and Dead Sea.

Hanîfites: one of the four recognised divisions of the Sunnis or orthodox Moslems.

Jebel: a hill or mountain. Jebel el Kuds, the hill-country round Jerusalem. Jebel Ajlûn, the modern name for the Land of Gilead, a very hilly district.

Khatîb, plural *Khutabah:* a Mohammedan teacher or priest.

Koran: literally, 'reading'; the Moslem sacred book.

Neby: a prophet (specially Jewish) or his supposed tomb.

Nusrâneh, plural *Nusârah:* the Moslem term for Christians; Nazarene.

Sheikh: literally, an 'old man,' the chief of a village or tribe.

Wely, plural *Ouliah:* a Moslem saint or his reputed tomb.

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